WORLD / A20
Palin's husband refuses to testify in abuse-of-power probe vs his wife

WORLD / A19
Toxic milk scandal in China widens

2BU / E1
Ateneo vs La Salle: Preview of UAAP Season 71 finals

NEWS / A2
Unioil rolls back price by P3/liter

PNP: Ransom demanded for 2 aid workers

By Christine O. Avendaño in Manila and Julie S. Alipala Inquirer Mindanao

RANSOM HAS BEEN DEMANDED FOR the release of two peace activists kidnapped in Basilan on Sept. 15, Philippine National Police Director General Avelino Razon said yesterday.

But Razon gave no details on the ransom demand for the release of Esperanza Hupida and Merlie Mendoza, only that negotiations were being conducted.

"A team of professional negotiators" from the Police Anti-Crime and Emer-

PNP RANSOM, A4

Biazon questions KL role as RP peace broker

By Terra Quimpando

THE BUDGET HEARING YESTERDAY AT the Senate shifted, courtesy of Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, from talk about money to the stalled peace process in Mindanao.

Addressing officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs who came to present its

BIAZON, A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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World stock markets soar

AN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL GROUP INC. (AIG) investment poster is displayed at the Philamlife headquarters in Makati City on Sept. 19. A Philamlife official says it is insulated from the financial difficulties of its parent company AIG.

US rescue plan 'aims at heart of problem'

WASHINGTON—GLOBAL STOCK markets soared Friday after a punishing week as news of a possible US government plan to rescue banks from toxic mortgage debt brought hope of a letup in the world's worst financial crisis in decades.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index surged a stunning 9.61 percent to 19,327.75, while Japan's Nikkei 225 average rose 3.6 percent at 11,903.86.

As trading opened in Europe, Britain's FTSE 100 jumped 7 percent to 5,223.60 and France's CAC 40 shot up 5.9 percent.

"This means off Judgment Day," Anthony Sabino, professor of law and business at St. John's University, said of the US rescue plan.

"This is a detox for banks, and will help cleanse themselves of the bad mortgage securities, loans and everything else that has hurt them."

WORLD, A6

'WHAT TO WEAR TO 'WAR' Presidents Arroyo launches a "War vs Red Tape" at the Palace to mark the 108th founding anniversary of the Civil Service Commission on Friday. CSC is lead implementor of the Anti-Red Tape Law.

It's business as usual at Philamlife, says CEO

By Doris C. Dumlao

IT'S BUSINESS AS USUAL AT THE country's biggest insurance firm, the Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co. (Philamlife).

In an interview with the business yesterday, Philamlife president and CEO Jose Cuisia Jr. said that despite concern about parent company American International Group Inc. (AIG) in the US, there was no unusual redemption of investments in Philamlife because clients and agents had been fully assured that the company was capable of meetings its commitment.

"Philamlife is separately capitalized ... [it] has its own capital base, its own investment portfolio, and these are principally in local marketable government securities and prime corporate bonds and a small amount of blue chip stocks," Cuisia said.

IT'S BUSINESS, A9

Local financial markets laud banks' disclosure of exposure to Lehman

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL FINANCIAL MARKETS WELCOMED the disclosure of banks' exposure to Lehman Brothers, as well as the collective efforts being undertaken by central banks across the globe to address the crisis.

The ripple effect of the financial crisis in the United States has been felt by the local banking system, but only slightly—not enough to rock it to its foundations.

According to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, local banks have built up sufficient capi-

LOCAL, A9

Roxas urges US: Deport Bolante straight to RP

THE US GOVERNMENT SHOULD DEport former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-Joc" Bolante straight to the Philippines because a stopover may allow him to slip away, according to Sen. Mar Roxas.

In a letter sent to US Ambassador Kristie Kenney on Thursday, Roxas cited the gravity of Bolante's purported crime and sought the American government's help in bringing the latter back to Manila.

Bolante, who is being held in the United States and is seeking asylum there, is accused of misappropriating

ROXAS, A15

GOLD AND SILVER To mark his 50th birthday and 25 years as a photojournalist, Ernie U. Sarmiento, Inquirer's chief photographer (2nd from right), is holding a photo exhibit entitled "Oro, Plata, Mata" on the 4th floor of TriNoma Mall in Quezon City. Attentive viewers include from left, Sarmiento's mother, Minda Sarmiento; his brother Dr. Emmanuel Sarmiento; and Inquirer president/CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez. The exhibit runs until Sept. 24.

Texters more dangerous than drunks–UK study

LONDON—SENDING TEXT MESSAGES from your mobile phone while driving is more dangerous than climbing behind the wheel under the influence of drink or drugs, a study by Britain's Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) has found.

The reaction time of people texting as they drove fell by 35 percent, while those who had consumed the legal limit of alcohol, or taken cannabis, fell by 21 percent and 12 percent respectively, according to the study.

The Inquirer asked the Land Transportation Office (LTO) traffic safety division chief Daisy Jacobo to comment on the British transport survey and how it applies to the Philippines, tagged as the texting capital of the world.

"Anything that takes the driver's focus away from the wheel is dangerous. It is common sense to focus on safe driving, that's why one wears a seat

TEXTERS, A15

RP: From texting capital to leader in (Inter)networking

By Riza T. Olchondra

YUP, WE SOCIALIZE TO THE MAX.

The Philippines not only has the reputation as the texting capital of the world, with one billion text messages sent daily, but it also has the highest number of Internet users in the 16 to 64 age group who join social networking groups.

In Universal McCann's study on social media Wave 3 report, the Philippines had the highest penetration of social networking among Internet users at 85.1 percent, compared with the global average of 57.5 percent.

RP-ISSUES, A11

Where is Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith?

By Leila B. Salaverria and Jeannen Awing

A LAWYER QUESTIONED THE whereabouts of American serviceman Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, citing information from a US embassy official that the soldier had been taken out of the embassy and was staying somewhere in Quezon City.

During oral arguments at the Supreme Court on who should have custody of Smith, lawyer Harry Roque said the Office of the Solicitor General should verify the place of detention of the American Marine.

The session lasted almost six hours yesterday, starting at 1:30 p.m. with Chief Justice Reynato Puno presiding and ending at around 7:15 p.m.

Roque, who represents Jovito Salonga, said Smith's earlier transfer to the US embassy was the basis for the Court of Appeals' decision dismissing as moot the petition questioning the Makati Regional Trial Court's order directing that Smith be detained at the Makati City Jail.

Thus, his present whereabouts should be verified.

Roque said he received information on Sept. 4 from a "logistics person," a

WHERE, A4

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

6/42 SUERTRES FOUR DIGIT MEGALOTTO 6/45 9 10 22 28 32 35 P8,914,993.20

Del Callar quits as Napocor chief

Unioil cuts gas price by P3

By Abigail L. Ho

A DAY AFTER ALL OIL COMPANIES cut fuel prices by P1, Unioil Petroleum Philippines Dec. followed suit with a bigger reduction of P3 a liter for gasoline and P2 a liter for diesel and kerosene.

"Unioil will always reflect true prices based on market forces, supply, and would roll prices for the ultimate benefit of the consuming public," Unioil general manager Carlito Martinez-Cruz said in a statement yesterday.

Martinez-Cruz said the price adjustment, which take effect 12:2 p.m. today, were prompted by the "significant decrease" in world petroleum prices.

Brightoil Petroleum's Dubai crude declined to an average of $97.28 a barrel from $122.86 a barrel in August.

While announcing a bigger price rollback, Unioil complained that it was facing problems with oil importations.

Delayed imports

Unioil executive Ernesto Martinez said the release of the oil firm's recent oil imports had been delayed because of an issue regarding its authority to import.

"So far as we are concerned, since the taxes have been paid for the importation and a corresponding authority to release imported goods' has been issued, the release of the products should therefore as a matter of course," he said.

"We are hoping that this issue would soon be sorted out. If only the Unioil can be able to resume normally sell its products to the buying public at significantly lower prices," he added.

But oilfirms' labor and transport groups claim the prices of diesel should actually be P11 lower than prevailing pump prices.

Piston march

On Monday, the Pagbabatan ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper at Operator Nationwide (PISTON) and Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) will lead a march to Malacañan bridge to denounce "Malacañang's collusion with big oil companies to defend the overpricing of oil products."

"The president must a "one time, big time" oil price rollback," it said.

Piston president Mano Boy said in a press briefing in Quezon City yesterday that the current P49 per liter price of diesel is overpriced by P11. He said they based their computation on the cost of diesel per liter on November 2007, when Dubai crude was $81.897 per barrel—the current price level.

Bayan said public transport drivers will only consider a fare rollback if oil companies lower the price of diesel to the coming under its two tranches of P6 and P5.

By Abigail L. Ho

ENERGY SECRETARY ANGELO Reyes has confirmed that National Power Corp. president Cyril del Callar has indeed filed his resignation as head of the state firm.

"Yes, I am confirming. I have a copy of his resignation letter," Reyes said in a telephone interview yesterday.

Del Callar, in his resignation letter submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo on Sept. 8, cited "health reasons" for his wanting to leave Napocor.

"I am most grateful and privileged to have been given the opportunity to serve our country and people. I join the Excellency in all her programs and efforts to strengthen the country and uplift the lives of our countrymen," the letter said.

The resignation will take effect on Sept. 30.

Asked about Del Callar's replacement, Reyes said Malacañang should be the one to make that announcement.

Since Wednesday morning, talk of Del Callar's resignation had been going the rounds in the industry, with his successor said to be Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. vice president for asset management and electricity trading Emilia Tungcab.

Another named being mentioned by industry sources as possible replacement for Del Callar is Maibarel Debuyan, debunked unofficially confirmed.

Reached for comment, Tungcab said he would rather not say anything since "nothing is official yet."

DEL CALLAR

Del Callar has been at the helm of Napocor since March 2005.

In his three-year stint as the state power firm, he was able to propel Napocor back to the black the first year he assumed the position, ending with a net income of P86 billion from a net loss of P10 billion in 2004. Net income in 2006 stood at P60 billion.

Napocor's debt, ballooned to its largest in 2005 at P333 billion, following the capping of its uncollectible purchased power cost at 40 centavos per kilowatt-hour in 2002.

On the flipside, it was also under Del Callar's term that questions were raised about Napocor's coal procurement process, prompted by allegations of "ghost deliveries" and the purchase of overpriced coal.

Prior to being appointed Napocor president, Del Callar spent eight years as undersecretary at the Department of Energy overseeing power-related policies and programs. He was instrumental in the formulation and implementation of Republic Act No. 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (EPIRA).

Before joining the government, he was a practicing lawyer at the law firm of Sycip Salazar, R.A.V. Bautista and Associates. He also served as a member of the executive staff.

Palace bares revamp at DOE

By Michael Lim Ubac

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS effected yet another revamp in the energy department, with more changes expected to follow soon.

President Arroyo named Zenaida Ampil-quian as undersecretary in the Department of Energy (DOE), replacing Francisco Dello-Iacono.

She also named Loreto Ayson as Energy undersecretary, replacing Melinda L. Ocampo, and Ramon Allan V. Oca as Energy assistant secretary vice Aurora M. Roland.

Their appointments took effect on Sept. 17, according to Press Secretary Jesse Robredo.

Malacañang also confirmed the resignation of Cyril del Callar as president of the National Power Corp. due to health reasons.

The President had sent his resignation letter, but has yet to "approve or reject it," Duterte told reporters.

Del Callar's resignation was first filed in June 2007, but was resubmitted this September.

Duterte said the operations of Napocor and the thrust of government on privatization and tending alternative energy sources would not be affected by Del Callar's resignation.

Duterte refused to confirm rumors that outgoing Philippine National Police Director General Avelino Razon Jr. is being groomed to replace the ailing, Retired Secretary Ashton Hurtado Ermita.

Razon will retire on Sept. 27.

President Arroyo wants to return to Manila from New York in time for the PNP turnover ceremony on Sept. 27, said Duterte.

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Woman backs Sabio story of bribe attempt

By Leila B. Salaverria

A RELATIVE OF businessman Francisco de Borja Jr. yesterday appeared before the Department of Justice to support the allegation that De Borja had tried to bribe Court of Appeals justice Jose Sabio Jr. on behalf of the Manila Electric Co.

Evelyn Chavez, who said she is the second cousin of De Borja, said the businessman had called her sometime in June 2007 to ask for the magistrate's cell phone number. She said De Borja then volunteered the information that his solicitation was to have Sabio recuse or inhibit himself from the case.

De Borja allegedly told her that the Lopez family, which controls Meralco, trusted Sabio off the case "because they were more comfortable with the other justice."

Meralco is locked in a legal battle with the Government Service and Insurance System (GSIS) over the legality of board elections held earlier this year.

Sabio publicly complained that the case had been unnecessarily raised to the Supreme Court, led to the dismissal of Justice Monina Bosses, the ponente of the case, who was cited for dishonesty and for showing undue interest in the case. Sabio was suspended for two months for talking about the case with private persons. Three other justices were reprimanded.

In the DOJ hearing, Sabio and his lawyer Vicente Chatchlan asked the DOJ panel to look into a possible conspiracy between De Borja and Rosas.

"It is very clear even from the transcript of the road that Justice Rosas was also interested in leaving me out of the case," said Sabio, adding that Rosas should not have initiated a bribery complaint if he (Sabio) actually did not take place.

"How sincere am I being framed in front of Meralco, which happens to be the source of the bribe money that was offered to me. This is the conspiracy that we are talking about," Sabio said.

Sabio alleged that De Borja, on his own, could not have brought up the P30 million offered to him.

De Borja and Sabio, also official friends, Lopez have denied they were entangled in bribe the magistrate.

Chatchlan suggested that the DOJ subpoenas "other parties" in the conspiracy, apparently referring to Lopezes.

But De Borja's counsel Nicolas Quiz said the DOJ investigation into prematture. The Supreme Court decides that inhibited Sabio's allegation to the DOJ are not yet final, he said.

Cruz also said that DOJ had no jurisdiction to investigate allegations made against a justice, since such a complaint should be prosecuted before the Ombudsman. He also said there is no such crime as "attempted bribery."

"My client is not worried at all about the charges against him because based on the subpoena, he's being charged with attempted bribery and there's no such thing... Bribery is either consummated or not at all," he said.

He also pointed out that only a public officials could be charged with bribery.

Also facing the panel yesterday was Sabio's daughter Gloria Jr., who told the panel that her father had told her and her mother about the alleged bribery attempt even after it was made.

EVELYN CHAVEZ and Court of Appeals Justice Sabio during the hearing

PAF colonel found dead

By Julie M. Aurelio

AN AIR FORCE colonel who had just finished his physical fitness test was found dead inside his room at the Villamor Air Base in Pasay City yesterday.

Police speculated that a heart attack likely caused the death of 54-year-old Col. Miguel Coquilla Gadugo, an native officer of the Air Force. He was discovered sprawled inside his room at 6:30 a.m.

The senior officer is the chief of the Air Force mail Research Development Center at the Nina Bernardo in Base in Lipa City.

Southern Police District Chief, Supt. Nicanor Bartolome Jr., said an Filipino Gadugo fell ill after a 6 a.m. physical fitness test at the Perimeter Path in Villamor Air Base.

Wing Capt. Ayleen Bonnayar Jr., said an Filipino fell ill and a bit dizzy after the exercise. Bonnayar brought him to his room so that he could rest," the police official said yesterday.

The Pasay City police have received a call that a dead body had been found inside Room 18 on the second floor of the Married Officers Quarters on Ferdinand Street at the base.

No foul play

Bartolome explained that there were no signs of foul play.

"We're not ruling out foul play until the investigation is concluded, but right now there are no such indications," he said, adding that they are still waiting for the final investigation report.

A physician from the Philippine Air Force General Hospital responded to the scene and told police that Gadugo could have died from natural causes such as a heart attack.

"A certain Dr. Tomaño examined Gadugo's body and told our investigators that initially, he is looking at a heart attack or a stroke as the cause of death," said Sr. Supt. Manuelo Tolores, the Pasay City police chief.

Gadugo was reportedly up for promotion to brigadier general, which requires he pass also required to complete a physical fitness test and a medical examination.

Nakolo said a physical fitness test consists of push-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups and running several laps.

"Your before a physical fitness test, a participant would still have to undergo a medical examination and electrocardiogram (ECG) to see if he is fit enough to run the laps," Nakolo explained.

In April this year, a [illegible] Army colonel was also found dead inside his room in Fort Bonifacio in Taguig City with a gunshot wound on his head and a suicide note by his side.

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Where is Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith?

From page A1

US soldier involved in implementing the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), that Smith was staying in Quezon City.

"I don't [like it as gospel truth] but the Office of the Solicitor General should certify the information if he has been transferred outside the US embassy ... The OSG should have at least informed the court of the transfer. It is for this reason that I ask short duration from the start," he said.

He added that this information seems to have been confirmed by US Ambassador to the Philippines Edwin Gresory when she was quoted in a report saying that Smith was detained in a compound.

Last seen Sept. 12

In an ambush interview before the start of the oral arguments, Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera said executive officials last saw Smith at the US embassy on Sept. 12.

She also said she based on reports, Smith was never taken out of the embassy except to go to the hospital.

After Smith was convicted on Dec. 4, 1998, of raping a Filipina identified only as "Nicole," the Makati RTC ordered him detained at the Makati City Jail. The soldier was taken to the detention center a few hours later. But on Dec. 10 he was brought to the US embassy in the dead of night.

Discrimination

Law dean Hadilco Agabin, who represents the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, also argued before the high court that detaining Smith at the US embassy runs a "serious form of discrimination, against our own countrymen in our own country."

Chief Justice Puno later made the same observation: "This seem to have made the decision I that the best way of protecting our people, our sovereignty and the integrity of our legal system is to be notwithstanding custody of the accused [something more] for moving here."

In response to a question of Justice Ruben Reyes on whether this was discriminatory even if the US and Philippine governments had agreed to this, Agabin answered in the affirmative.

"It won't affect the fact that a Filipina defendant has been discriminated against ... It is unconstitutional because it violates the equal protection clause," he said.

Roque also told the court that there was violation of the equal protection clause of the Constitution when Smith was transferred to the embassy and kept in an air-conditioned room with a view of Manila bay and other amenities, while inmates in Philippine jails snuggled in infectious conditions.

Human rights violation?

Justice Leonardo Quisumbing asked if there would be a violation of human rights if Smith had been kept at the Makati City Jail and abused by the inmates there.

When Roque agreed, Quisumbing then asked if the executive officials were in a "dilemma if we do, damned if we don't position."

Roque denied this, adding that he plans to ask the government to improve jail conditions in the country.

Agabin also said that with Smith detained at the US embassy, it means that the Philippines has lost custody of him and the court has lost jurisdiction over him. He noted that the US embassy could fly Smith out of the country without the Philippine officials' knowledge.

Courts helpless?

Reyes then asked if this means that the courts were helpless in doing things.

Agabin replied that this could be the case.

"The Philippine trial courts will be helpless. But the DFA [Department of Foreign Affairs] can initiate extradition proceedings, but it can be resisted," he said.

SMITH: Last seen by local officials Sept. 12

DEFENDERS OF 'NICOLE': Sen. Justin Salonga, lawyers Pacifico Agabin and Harry Roque as the Supreme Court hearing for the oral arguments on the custody case of US soldier Daniel Smith who's been convicted for the rape of a Filipina in Subic alias Nicole.

Roque also said that although the VFA provides that the United States should surrender its territorial accused if crimes, there is no guarantee that it will.

He added that if the US would refuse to surrender its soldier, then there was not much the courts could do since measures could not be served in the US embassy or at the residences of ambassadors.

Roque also said the executive officials who authorized the transfer of Smith should be cited for contempt because when the Alarcon was taken from the city jail, Smith had a pending petition at the appellate court questioning the order committing him to the city jail. The appellate court subsequently dismissed Smith's petition as moot.

Agabin also argued before the high court that it should review its October 2000 decision upholding the constitutionality of the VFA in light of recent developments, including the dispute on Smith's custody and the fact that the American troops' visit is taking on a permanent nature.

He also said that although the Philippine Senate ratified the VFA as a treaty, the US Senate did not.

Justice Minita Chico-Nazario pointed out that the VFA was approved by the President, ratified by the Senate and upheld by the Supreme Court. And since the agreement provides that the case countries can agree on the place of detention, she asked if the executive officials were just implementing the VFA when Smith was transferred.

Rape is a capital offense

Agabin replied in the affirmative, but added that even if the custody of Smith as the US embassy was valid under the VFA, there was still grave abuse of discretion on the part of the country's executive officials.

A Filipino was raped, he said, and rape was a capital offense. In other cases, even when the trial is VFA, it would surrender custody of soldiers accused of non-service related crimes to the host countries.

Justice Teresita Leonardo-De Castro also asked whether the parties were questioning the agreement on their custody or Smith, because they consider the VFA unconstitutional.

VFA compliance

Roque replied in the affirmative. He also pointed out that there was no compliance with the Romulo-Kenney Exchange of Notes which the Philippine Senate ratified the VFA because the US Senate did not ratify the same agreement.

But Justice Antonio Carpio said the parties questioning the VFA should first prove that it was unconstitutional before they could attack the constitutionality of placing Smith under the US embassy's custody.

Carpio noted that the issue was whether or not the VFA could be considered a treaty with the lack of the US Senate's ratification.

"It now boils down to whether the VFA is a treaty in fact in the Constitution is concerned. Unless you are asking the court to reverse its decision that the VFA is constitutional, you cannot assail its custody," he said.

Identity revealed

In an ambush interview, Roque revealed more details about the US soldier who told him about Smith's stashes in Quezon City.

Roque identified the soldier as Craig Mendiola, whom he met during a wine-tasting event at the Hyatt Hotel in Manila.

Roque told reporters that the soldier is a logistics officer claimed to know Smith personally because they used to serve together in the military.

Fifth glass of wine

The soldier was also on his fifth glass of wine when he made the revelations and "was feeling the amount of liquor's job," he added.

The lawyer also pointed out that there was no categorical denial from the US government.

Chief Justice Puno terminated the oral arguments at around 7:15 p.m. instructing the respondents and petitioners to submit within 30 days their respective memoranda to enforce their stands or other issues that were raised by either side.

The OSG was also asked to submit documents required by the high court, such as the minutes of the meeting of the panels that negotiated the VFA, particularly those concerned on jurisdiction and custody of foreign military personnel accused of crime in the Philippines.

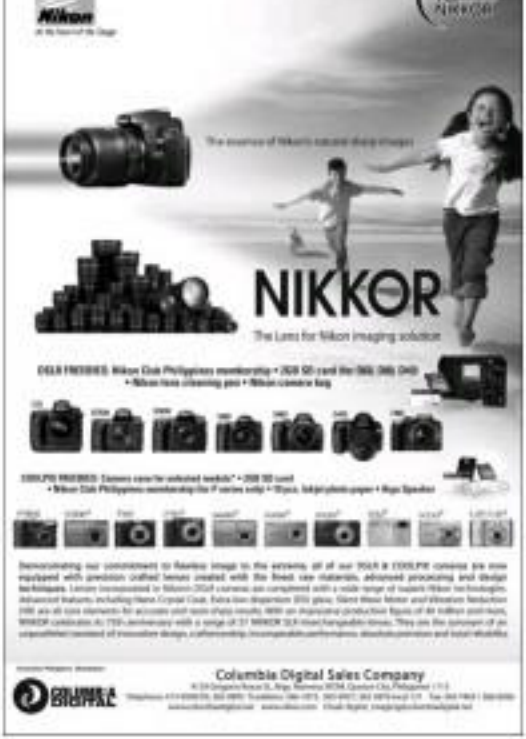
In his presentation to the court, Smith's lawyer Evalyn Ursua accused the Philippine government of committing a "complete deviation" of the provisions of the VFA provisions.

'We never had custody'

She complained that the government "never had custody" of Smith from the start of the trial until conviction.

There never was a request from the Department to take custody of Smith, she added.

Ursua insisted that the Makati RTC had jurisdiction of the accused from the start of the trial until the decision is rendered, in accordance with the Philippines' rules of criminal procedures as promulgated by the Supreme Court.



PNP: Ransom demanded . . .

From page A1

grocery firm power is now helping Basilan officials "to see (if) we can recover the remaining hostages," he told reporters in a chance interview in Zamboanga.

But despite Razon's statement, authorities in Basilan said they were clueless about the fate of the two Bonifacio Group workers.

"We have no idea," said Senior Supt. Salik Mustapacna, the police chief of Basilan.

Fr. Angel Calvo, president of the Nagkilan Foundation of which Dupida is the program director, denied Razon's claim of a ransom demand.

"Everything is still uncertain, we still do not know who took [the two women], and we still don't have reasons with them," Calvo said.

Mustapacna said the Basilan police had limited intelligence agents to gather information on the kidnappers, the conditions of the hostages and their possible location.

"We are hoping that this situation will not drag on," he said.

2 women 'safe'

Nevertheless, Razon said the two women were "safe."

"We have a strong belief that very soon they will be released," he said, adding that military rescue operations for the two women had been suspended to give way to negotiations.

Hinoyan said Basilan was among six people forcibly taken by a group of young armed men on Sept. 15 while they were passing Barangay Cabunganan, which borders the town of Tipo-Tipo Central and Albarka in Basilan.

Most of the hostages subsequently were released.

One of them, later said Mendoza also had a chance to get away but chose to stay behind because the people had been having problems with mobility.

No direct demand

On the phone with Inquirer Mindanao, Calvo said: "As we speak, we in the Nagkilan Foundation and the families of the kidnapped victims have not received any direct communication for a ransom demand, and we are not aware of any demand raised directly through other channels."

Calvo said that even during the protocol crisis management committee meeting yesterday, Basilan Vice Gov. Al Hadmod Sakkalul said nothing about a ransom demand.

Calvo's curious statement prompted the identity of the group that took Mendoza and Wajahlul had been exploited.

"But we are not getting anything. [or] not much, and [are not] still trying to get [other] clues from local government officials, from the rumors of the governor and the vice governor, from the local commanders, and also from our well-knowledgeable about the area. Yes, nothing," he said.

Rear Admiral Emilio Monreal Jr. commander of the naval forces in Western Mindanao, said the military's only information on the matter was that the abductees included minors aged 13 to 16.

Proof of life

Calvo said what he and concerned groups wanted now was "proof of life" of the two women from those with knowledge about the kidnapping.

He said that because of the absence of information on the fate of the hostages and the identities of the abductors, they had tapped the assistance of the secondcman Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Authorities had earlier rejected an offer from the MILF to help in locating the hostages, saying that the same negotiations could prove to be unhelpful.

But Calvo said: "Surely it is welcome. But we are not going to allow [the rebels] to go in the area because it might affect efforts to safely secure the victims."

Hadji Hassan Lantin, chair of the MILF in Basilan, said his men had reported that Mendoza and Dupida were seen in Barangay Lugus in Tipo-Tipo on Sept. 15.

But it was not clear whether the two women were seen before or after the abduction, Lantin said.

"We still don't have an idea on the location of the victims, but we keep supporting our forces on the ground to determine it," he said.

Working together

Lantin also said the representatives of the MILF and the government in what used to be the Ad-Hoc Joint Action Group in Basilan met in Isabela City yesterday "to discuss mechanisms" on how the secondcman and the government could again work together, this time to secure the release of Mendoza and Dupida.

The action group had been tasked to deal with crimes in areas where the MILF operates. It was dissolved after Mukaramg stopped the government panel in the peace negotiations with the secondcman.

Lantin said the meeting was attended by Brig. Gen. Mohammad Dar Asikalmi and Hadji Mohamad Abadilla of the MILF.

"Our hands are tied because there is no ceasefire and there are no peace talks. But we are determined to help and our representatives are ... coming out some mechanisms," Lantin said.

Corrections

IN THE SEPT. 9 ISSUE, the caption on a Page 15 photo (above) of the Entertainment section misnamed chef Robin Padilla's eldest daughter Queenie as shown second from left in the picture. Queenie is second from right. Second from left is PADILLA's son Ali.

* * *

IN THE SEPT. 14 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Tayin Fellow takes standing role: Judge Friday"—misstated the year when Maj. Jaime Victorino, the late husband of Presiding Judge Beatrice Tayin Fellow-Victorino, was killed in ambush. He was killed in 1986—not 1997.

THE SAME STORY misnamed the place where Maj. Victorino was ambushed. He was ambushed at the foot of Magtuluan Bridge in Manila—not on the Claro Rizon Bridge.

* * *

THE SAME STORY misstated that Judge Victorino worked as an assistant solicitor at the Office of the Solicitor General for 11 years. She is a member OSG in 1987 and went from the ranks to become senior solicitor. She left in 1997 after being appointed judge at the Pasig City Regional Trial Court.

* * *

THE SAME STORY misstated the names of two of Judge Victorino's three daughters. Her daughters are Mae-grafa Eugenio and Magnolia Eugenio—not Eugenia Margarita and Eugenia Magnolia.

* * *

THE SAME STORY misstated that Judge Victorino's third daughter Eugenia is working on her Masters degree in economics in Amsterdam. Eugenia is finishing her doctorate degree in economics.

* * *

IN THE SEPT. 19 ISSUE, a Page 4[7] headline—"Girls squealers cannot stay in new Davao chief"—erroneously referred to Carmelita Undiam, the new chief of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, as a man. Undiam is a woman.

* * *

The Daily Gospel

Saturday, September 20, 2008
24th Week in Ordinary Time
Memorial: Kim Taegon • Pail Chong
Hastings and Companions

1st Reading: 1 Cor 12:31-13:7, 12-14
Gospel: Lk 6:1-5

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Mining execs fear funding squeeze with US financial crisis

PHILIPPINE MINING DEVELOPMENT Association executive expressed concern that the US financial crisis could affect funding as the country ramps up its mining activities.

"With the challenge being financial institutions now, the access to capital in finance a project will certainly be more challenging," said Filipino mining executive Benjamin Philip Romualdez, head of the Association of Southeast Asian Federations of Mining Associations.

"There will be some aversion to risk financing among banking institutions. Generally speaking, a reevaluation of the risk profile of countries like the Philippines will be pursued a," he told reporters conference.

Romualdez, whose own company Benguet Corp. is in the early stages of several high-profile projects, said the local mining industry was hoping "this will be a short-term thing and so the short cause to settle there will be a repositioning where mining projects will still be projects that should move consideration in project fi- nance."

Minerals-rich Philippines, which has seen export growth plunge this year as electronics demand softened, is aggressively promoting mining investment to develop its copper, gold, chromite and nickel potential to take advantage of still buoyant metals prices.

Antonio Ebdal, chair of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, said that despite the trend of risk aversion toward emerging markets as the subprime mortgage lending crisis gripped and in the United States and elsewhere, mining remained a bright spot. AFP

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SECURITIES & EXCHANGE COMMISSION
METROMANILA

IN THE MATTER OF THE MANILA WATER COMPANY, INC. (Registrant)

REGISTRATION OF SECURITIES

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that on September 17, 2008, a sworn statement was filed with the Security and Exchange Commission for and on behalf of Manila Water Company, Inc. (the "Company") for the registration of up to Php 6,000,000,000.00 in aggregate principal amount of fixed rate corporate bonds (inclusive of an over-subscription option of up to Php 1,000,000,000.00) due 20 (3) from date of issue, in two different series.

According to the papers presented, the following persons are the officers/directors of the Company:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS	POSITION
Fernando Zobel de Ayala	Chairman of the Board and Executive Committee
Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II	Vice Chairman
Antonino T. Aquino	President
Delfin L. Lazaro	Director
Karen Dakring	Director
Hiroshi Nishihara	Director
Joselito D. Sibcaueste III	Director
Mario Saavedra	Director
Alberto L. Lopa	Director
Lester T. Ibañez*	Independent Director
Oscar S. Reyes*	Independent Director
Edmund M. Hernandez	Corporate Secretary

*Independent directors appointed for the purpose of compliance with the Company's pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Regulation Code.

Said registration statement and other papers/documents attached thereto are open to inspection by interested parties during business hours, and copies thereof, photostatic or otherwise, shall be furnished to every party at such reasonable fees as the Commission may prescribe.

Sgd.) JUSTINA CALLANGAN
Director
Corporate Finance Department

SEC - Dec. 10, 2008

OK for GMA to go to US, says Puno

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo can go abroad with her trip to the United States (US) marooned, so the executive officials previously assured her that the situation in Mindanao was now "stable," with "previous troublesome areas now secure."

Justice and Local Government Secretary Ronaldo Puno underscored the need for President Arroyo to push through with her trip to also show the world that the Philippine economy was strong despite the current global economic and financial upheavals.

President Arroyo is next to leave for New York on Sunday night to attend the United Nations General Assembly, after she will speak before world leaders. She is expected to return home on Sept. 27, according to Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Ermita said Ms Arroyo will be bringing along 71 members from her office, mostly administrative and security officials. He still did not know the number of lawmakers joining the US presidential trip. Divinina O. Aviendaro

HOME ARE THE SAILORS
More Filipino seamen recently released by pirates who hijacked their ship in Somalia are reunited with their families upon their arrival yesterday. Vice President Noli de Castro, who also welcomed them, watches in the background. Seventy-five more Filipinos were held as another hijacking yesterday, bringing to 79 the number of Filipinos still being held hostage by Somali pirates. RYAN PAGUIO

Commander Bravo strikes again

By Nikko Dizon

COMMANDER BRAVO HAS struck again. Military reports said the renegade commander of the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) led a predawn attack on a detachment of policemen in Lanao del Norte yesterday.

Government forces were able to repulse the rebels, military spokesperson Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres Jr. told reporters in Camp Aguinaldo.

Field reports said about 40 Bravo rebels belonging to the 118th base command of wanted rebel leader Abdullah Macapaz, alias Commander Bravo, tried to secure the detachment of the Citizens' Armed Force Geographical Unit (Cafgu) in Barangay Tingko-Tingko, Kauswagan town, at around 7:30 a.m.

Believing troops from the rebel Infantry Battalion have discovered improvised explosive device (IED) at a nearby Timoco electric tower.

Citing a report from Col. Ruben de Leon, 104th brigade commander, Torres said explosive experts defused the bombs.

"The Cafgu detachment that repulsed the rebels must have prevented the detonation of the explosives which would have damaged the tower," Torres said.

Torres said the military suspected that the Moro rebels aimed to blow up the Transco tower which was located near the Cafgu detachment.

On Thursday night, reports also doubted a homemade bomb planted near the Northwest Elementary School in Gen. Nieves, North Cotabato.

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- Understanding Customs Valuation October: 20 - 22
- Product Costing and Pricing October: 20

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- ISO 14000 Environmental Management System Documentation November: 24-25
- ISO 14000 Laboratory Internal Audit November: 26-27

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- Documentation of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) October: 13-17
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TRADE EVENTS
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- 59 Tao Lidera November: 14
- National Consumers' Week November: 17-21
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Financial crisis is last thing Bush needs now

WASHINGTON—MISSPOTE, OF his low approval ratings, President George W. Bush has sometimes likened himself to Harry Truman, an unpopular president whom he left office and now admired for his handling of the Cold War.

But in the midst of what some experts are calling a once-in-a-century financial meltdown, Bush could soon find himself struggling to avoid comparisons to a very different president—Herbert Hoover, who presided at the start of the Great Depression.

With Wall Street's upheaval spreading fear among investors around the globe, analysts agree there is plenty of blame to go around for leaving the situation downstream in this point.

Yet, since a president must ultimately bears the weight of history's judgment, Bush is seeing another piece of his legacy slip away.

"The question is, on whose watch did this whole mess happen?" said Tony Michaels, a political historian. "Where was the financial regulator? Where was the oversight? Where were you?"

This scene is the last thing Bush needed in the twilight of his presidency when his Republican Party is battling to keep the White House in the Nov. 4 election.

Treading cautiously

Bush's approval ratings of around 30 percent in opinion polls are among the worst of any modern US president near the end of his term.

Despite deep investor anxiety, no one is calling this the beginning of a depression like the one ushered in by the stock market crash of 1929.

But Bush is treading cautiously in the face of growing financial turmoil while his loyalists seek to deflect criticism that his own deregulatory zeal has contributed heavily to it.

The White House insists Bush is deeply engaged, though he has delegated direct management of the crisis to his top economic advisers.

He scrapped a political fundraising trip on Thursday and instead hunkered down in the White House where he made a brief appearance—two minutes and four seconds—to assure Americans he was prepared to go beyond the "extraordinary measures" already taken to calm the markets.

Reporters ignored

All week, Bush has ignored reporters' shouted questions about related developments. He has not held a full-scale news conference since July 15—an omission the White House said was out of concern that reporters would try to drag him into the battle between Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain.

Bush's response to the financial crisis has been. Rubbing reporters' said a political adviser Douglas Brinkley, referring to the widespread perception the president was out of touch with the situation when Hurricane "Katrina" devastated New Orleans in 2005. Reuters

Scientists see raging hormones in stock bubbles, crashes

PARIS—MANY ECONOMISTS believe that investors make decisions rationally, weighing up corporate data and other pricing signals to evaluate risks or risk before buying or selling stocks.

But that keystone belief in how markets function is now under mounting attack after the month's global stocks crash, the latest in a string of financial shocks over the past two decades.

Proponents of rival concepts say that primitive emotions, herd mentality and raging hormones are among the probable culprits that help inflate an asset bubble and then prick it.

Investigations into the theories of behavioral or emotional finance say conscious decisions are only the surface of a river with deep and powerful subterranean flow.

A boom-and-bust event can follow a distinct path, they say.

At first, investors are skeptical about dipping into a market.

Denial, then fear, then panic

When they perceive that outgoings are starting to profit rich by buying a given stock, they cautiously make a purchase and their confidence builds as the stock's value rises.

The gains fuel enthusiasm, which leads to the euphoric conviction, as the price spirals higher, that this is an easy way to wealth.

At this point—when the bubble is most inflated—the investor becomes indifferent to warning signs, such as share values in price-earnings ratios that are unsupportable by fundamentals.

What happens when the market ceases to rise?

The initial response is denial, be the investor still believes that his stocks will come back up and there is no point selling.

As prices slip further, denial order to fear and then, inevitably, to panic.

Traumatized by their loss, investors vow never to invest in stocks again—a sentiment that can be durably enforced if many others have also been burned.

Role of hormones

John Coates, a Cambridge University researcher into biochemistry and behavior, says market fluctuations are amplified by hormones.

In a post-Mr. Coates studied at US investment banks Goldman Sachs and Deutsche Bank in New York.

During the dot-com boom, he says, he was interested to see male traders "displaying classic symptoms of mania," with symptoms of competitiveness, raging strengths and diminished need for sleep.

Coates explored a hazard with Jan Brabers, a professor at the Cambridge Centre for Brain Repair.

They took saliva swabs from 17 male traders twice a day and measured the samples for two hormones.

Testosterone, cortisol

Those were testosterone, which is associated with male aggressiveness and sexual behavior, and cortisol, which is connected by the body to deal with "fight or flight" emergencies.

When the traders were in profit, their testosterone levels surged. But when they were in loss, or in fluctuation, it was their cortisol that rose densely.

Testosterone encourages confidence and risk-taking.

But research to animals suggests that, once the long term, high doses of the hormone impair judgment and encourage excessive risks.

Similarly, cortisol has a beneficial, euphoric effect in the short term, but after two weeks of exposure to it at high levels, the hormone can work negative, swelling confidence and magnifying fear of risk, Coates says.

"If you were to take an identical set of facts and present them to someone high on testosterone and someone high on cortisol, the first one would see opportunities everywhere and the second one nothing but risks," he says.

Coates says fund managers would be advised to get an "unbiased note" on the trading floor.

Women and elders were would add a calmer, longer perspective to the hardening, testosterone-driven actions of young male colleagues. AFP

World stock markets soar; US gov't rescue plan aims at heart

From page A1

Wrapping up one of the most turbulent weeks in memory, Asian and European markets surged after an overnight rally on Wall Street, where the Dow Jones industrial average advanced 410.05, or 3.86 percent, to 11,019.69—the biggest percentage gain since October 2002.

Investors on Asian bond fears were that the US government was seeking the power to rescue banks by buying distressed assets at the heart of the financial system turmoil that's brought down Wall Street giants Lehman Brothers, Merrill Lynch and Bear Stearns—prompting some global markets plunging earlier this week.

Aimed at the heart

Details of the plan were still being worked out, but US Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson said he hoped to have a solution "aimed right at the heart of this problem."

US congressional leaders said the plan would focus overwhelmingly with illiquid assets—the toxic source that has clustered balance sheets, pushed Lehman Brothers to file for bankruptcy protection and prompted the US bailout of American International Group.

"We hope to move very quickly. Time is of the essence," US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi said.

Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama similarly wondered what the plan would be.

"If you can separate the bad debt and learning overhang from the good liable parts of the banking sector, then would be viewed as an exceptionally positive development—if they can get rid of the bad," said Tom Modos, senior currency strategist with ANZ Bank in Sydney.

Roots of the crisis

The roots of the Asian crisis can be traced to the lending for home mortgages, especially subprime loans given to borrowers with uncertain credit—during the US housing boom.

Lenders and borrowers had been counting on home prices to keep increasing upward. But when the housing market went bust, home prices plummeted. Foreclosures spiked and rising mortgage rates also clobbered some homeowners.

As financial companies racked up multibillion-dollar losses on toxic mortgage investments, and credit problems spread globally, many hoarded cash and clamped down on lending.

US tries multiple quick fixes to meet crisis

WASHINGTON—URGENTLY moving on multiple fronts to stem the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s, the US government Friday to protect money market mutual funds against losses and temporarily banned short-selling of company stocks.

The Treasury Department asked Congress to give it sweeping power to buy up toxic debt that has endangered Wall Street.

That stirred consumer and business spending, dragging down the economy.

World central banks

The biggest bouse of a potential government fix is it would help the banking industry as a whole, said Scott Fullman, director of derivatives investment strategy for New York-based investment broker Wells Capital Group.

On Friday, the world's central banks kept striving to free up jammed money markets, pouring more money in.

Japan, Australia, India and Indonesia pumped over $41 billion into their money markets as cash remained hard to find despite Thursday's unprecedented move by the US Federal Reserve to make $180 billion available to the banking system.

But in Europe, there were signs that the euros was easing.

The cost of borrowing dollars overnight fell back toward the Federal Reserve's 2 percent target, compared with Thursday's London interbank offered rate fixing of 3.04375 percent, and three-month borrowing costs also did.

Short-selling

The Bank of England offered $40 billion to banks but only half of it was snapped up.

The European Central Bank has also offered up another $40 billion.

Britain imposed a temporary ban on short-selling of financial stocks on Thursday. The Wall Street Journal reported US regulators were considering a similar step.

Short-selling allows investors to profit from falling prices and has helped bring Wall Street issues to their knees.

Fewer of a US rescue plan, long geared to rally in US stock markets, although Wall Street would attract funding too. Investors rose 245 points, or 2.2 percent, to 11,227, and S&P 500 futures climbed 28 points, or 2.2 percent, to 1,302.

The dollar also rose, advancing to 105.42 yen, while the euro fell to $1.4271.

In Oslo, the Shanghai benchmark jumped 9.3 percent—its biggest gain ever.

Oil prices rose above $116 a barrel Friday.

Light, sweet crude for October delivery rose $2.65 to $116 during a hard to discern in trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange by noon in Europe. Overnight, the contract rose 72 cents to settle at $97.46. AFP, Reuters

US bailout of ailing firms smacks of double standard

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED States unleashed $29bn (£16bn) on Friday in attempting to head off cash-starved companies facing a replay of financial crisis a decade ago—yet now throws a lifeline to its own companies ravaged by a credit crisis of a more cogent city smacks of double standards.

In a bid to avert bankruptcy, the US Federal Reserve, the country's central bank, pumped $85 billion to bail out America's largest insurer AIG on Tuesday, sending global markets in a tailspin that continues to reverberate. Thursday.

Earlier, Americans saw up to a $200 billion bailout of some of financially stricken mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Last month, $30 billion was injected to prevent a default by investment bank Bear Stearns.

"But excess to rescue them, some economists say, contrasted with the approach the Federal Reserve and the International Monetary Fund took during the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis, when the region was told to live with the economic consequences of their folly.

"I guess some of the panelists in Washington arguing against government rescue being used for bail out local companies have to look at what they are now backing—calling for various government interventions," noted Raghuram Rajan, the chief economist at the International Monetary Fund between 2003 and 2006.

"Well, it's when it hits you, then you realize what other countries were experiencing," he told MPP in a telephone interview from the University of Chicago, where he resumed teaching after the IMF chief.

"It's all very well to say 'Let the financial system go, let it find its equilibrium,'" he said. "But when it is in the face of spreadsheet attacks and jobless are being hammered and it looks like the larger institutions are going to collapse, it is pretty natural for the government to step in and say, 'We can't let this happen.'"

When the IMF pledged $35 billion to help South Korea survive the Asian crisis, it was on condition that Seoul allowed ailing banks and other companies to collapse rather than bail them out, economist Tony Dwyer Derek, who was deeply involved in the talks with the IMF, was quoted saying in the New York Times on Thursday.

Hans is professor of economics at Rowa University in Seoul, he said that while the US crisis was different—it is global rather than restricted to one region like Asia.—"Wall-ington is following a different script this time." Unlike this US crisis, which was triggered largely by a rapidly inflated real estate, the Asian financial stemmed from a collapse of confidence of several economies, whose banks had been encouraged to borrow heavily from overseas, said Nicholas Leeds, an Asian expert in the Washington-based Peterson Institute for International Economics.

"You are looking at institutions that lie at the heart of the global financial system," he said, comparing the crisis to the Asian experience.

The US Treasury has said: "All loans were envisaged by the IMF for them to restore their foreign exchange denominated debts.

But some experts defended the US bailout, saying it was unavoidable to save the global financial system.

"I think the United States has done a tremendous service to the rest of the world in preventing the collapse of AIG because the main losses in an AIG collapse would have been European banks,"

Local financial markets laud banks' disclosure of exposure to Lehman

From page B-1

ial to absorb potential losses from their exposure to bankrupt Lehman Brothers, the fourth largest investment bank on Wall Street at one time.

Disclosures

The business has reported that seven banks in the country have a total exposure of $360 million to Lehman—equivalent to a mere 1 percent of the banks' total assets.

Retail tycoon Henry Sy's Banco de Oro Unibank has the biggest total exposure to Lehman at $134 million, followed by the state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines at $90 million, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. at $71 million, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. at $40 million, Standard Chartered Bank Manila branch at $26 million, Bank of Commerce at $25 million and United Coconut Planters Bank at $18 million.

Shares jump

Shares of listed banks theirebank, Banco de Oro and BDO, went up by 13 percent, 6.6 percent and 5 percent, respectively, after the extent of their limited exposure to Lehman was disclosed.

The financial sector jumped by 7.33 percent, leading the rebound to the broad stock market, where the main index rose by 4.89 percent.

"The BSP number confirms our initial view that exposure to Lehman is not too serious," said Jomar Lucero, of stock brokerage Campos, Lanuza and Co. Inc. "With increased capitalization and stronger balance sheets, Philippine banks are expected to shrug off the demise of Lehman."

"Our investors should not let their guard down," Lucero said in a commentary yesterday. He noted that there were other foreign financial institutions, such as ING, Citigroup, and Morgan Stanley, which were able to market their respective products to local banks.

"In so, this presents a more serious risk than just Lehman's demise," Lucero added.

Limited impact

"The few banks that have investments in Lehman have declared that there will have limited impact on their financial standing on account of their big asset base," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a statement yesterday.

"We are confident ... that our banking system can withstand the fallout from the financial crisis in the US."

"The reforms we have instituted in the past years are serving us in good stead in terms of capital build-up, enhanced risk management and influence to good governance," Tetangco said.

Bad loans ratio

The BSP also announced that the ratio of bad loans to the total loans of universal and commercial banks continued to decline to a new low of 3.9% percent as of end-June. The non-performing loan (NPL) ratio dipped from the 4.17-percent rate posted in May, and the 5.21-percent ratio seen in June last year.

A loan is deemed past due one day after a missed quarterly or semestral payment obligation. It is also classified as non-performing if it remains past due payment remains uncollected 30 days after.

"What makes the lower NPL ratio quite meaningful is the fact that it was not limited to a reduction in accounts experiencing payment difficulties," Tetangco said.

"The numbers also show that the decline in the ratio was augmented by the reporting in the total loans portfolio by almost P54 billion, and a corresponding P1.68-billion decline in restructured loans," he explained.

"This expansion in the loan portfolio is just an critical since it makes credit available for productive economic endeavors."

Exposure covered

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, BDO said its gross exposure of $134 million to Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. represented the face value of securities held by the bank. However, BDO said the financial had declined prior to Sept. 15 (when Lehman declared bankruptcy) due to a reduction in its market values and the conduct of hedging transactions.

The bank said additional provisions totaling P1.8 billion had been allocated for its remaining exposure to Lehman, thus fully covering it.

In a message sent to the bourse, BDO president Nestor Tan said: "We anticipate debt recovery to improve as things calm down."

Tan said that the market continued to track Lehman's debt papers, which means that the bank could opt to unload its exposure. As an indication, he said, there were buyers in the global markets willing to buy Lehman's debt at 35 to 40 percent of its par value.

"We have taken measures to cover risk positions [hedging] where we consider them vulnerable," Tan said.

P5 billion earned

A spokesperson from DBP said the bank also expected to unlock some values from its exposure to Lehman.

DBP sources said some $80 million exposure/ indirect exposure to Lehman Brothers Treasury Co., a special purpose vehicle (SPV) subsidiary based in The Netherlands. The remaining $30 million represented exposure to a Bank of America issuance that was arranged by Lehman.

DBP sources said the bank had already earned around P5 billion from its investments in Lehman and would now put up P3 billion in provision for its exposure.

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It's business as usual at Philamlife, says CEO

From page B-1

"Of course, we've always had a very conservative investment strategy and that has paid off. We have no exposure to Lehman."

Lehman Brothers, the fourth biggest investment bank on Wall Street at one time, eventually declared bankruptcy—a move that has rocked the financial world.

Cuisia explained that bulk of Philamlife's investment portfolio was in fixed income instruments, mostly long-term Philippine government securities with a 10- to 20-year maturity. The company's total consolidated investments amounted to P164.5 billion as of end-2007.

He said Philamlife and its local subsidiaries would continue to thrive even if parent firm AIG—which has obtained an $85-billion lifeline from the US government—were to sell Philamlife to a new investor. However, he said, there was no decision on the matter yet.

No part of the state-sponsored financial assistance and to line with its restructuring, AIG is widely expected to sell some assets outside the United States.

"Let's assume it's sold," Cuisia said, referring to Philamlife. "Let's say a bank buys us, which is good because we can do bancassurance. We'll still meet all of our contractual obligations.

"[Philamlife] will remain the largest insurance company, so why would anyone who buys wants to shift strategy? They will want Philamlife to grow."

Affiliate businesses

Bancassurance is the practice of selling life insurance products through bank branches. But under local banking regulations, a bank must have an equity interest in the company whose products it will sell.

Apart from insurance, Philamlife's affiliate businesses include pre-need plans, healthcare, banking, media ventures, asset management, property and casualty insurance, property management and development and business process outsourcing.

Cuisia said the panicsin that had gripped local financial markets would be temporary and should ease as the dust from screening a prolonged turmoil on Wall Street, he said the Philippine financial system was in good position to handle the crisis.

The Philamlife chief had written to all employees and agents, assuring them that their interests would be protected.

Cuisia: We are separately capitalized

and they could count on the company's financial strength.

Philamlife is the country's largest insurance company with consolidated assets of P179 billion and equity of P49.5 billion as of end-2007. In 2007, it generated P84.7 billion in revenue, up by 14 percent.

No exposure to Lehman

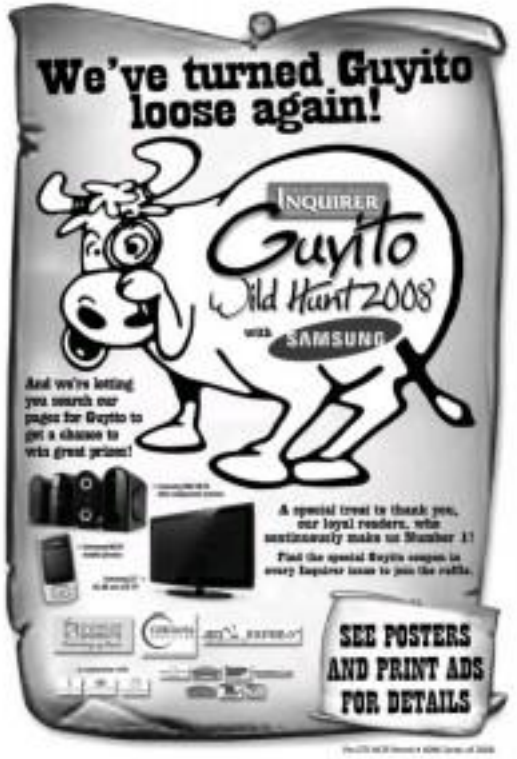
Philamlife's thrift bank subsidiary AIG Philbus criticized the bourse for its use of a picture of the bank's logo and headquarters in a story on some other local banks' exposure to Lehman.

Philam Savings' general counsel Edwina Pineda said the bank did not have any exposure to Lehman Brothers and that information was not contained in the article.

The banks mentioned in the bourse story about having exposure to Lehman were Banco de Oro Unibank, state-owned Development Bank of the Philippines, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Rizal Commercial Banking Corp., Standard Chartered Bank (Manila branch), Bank of Commerce, and United Coconut Planters Bank.

"Even though the ... article does not include AIG Philam Bank among those with exposures to Lehman, the juxtaposition of the picture of the logo beside of AIG Philam Bank with the article wrongly and unjustly creates the impression that AIG Philam Bank also has dealings with these banks affected by the Lehman Brothers issue," Pineda said.

The legal counsel demanded a public apology from the bourse.



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OPINION

Costly panic

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THE PRICE OF RICE IN major rice exporting countries has fallen sharply. Five-percent broken rice was being offered at $540 per ton in Vietnam this week, $100 less than its price in Thailand, the world's largest exporter of rice. At that price, rice now costs less than half of what it cost in April when panic buying by the Philippines, the world's biggest importer of the staple, propelled the price to $1,080 per ton.

EDITORIAL

The bad news is that the lower prices abroad won't translate into lower prices at home for the Filipino consumers. The National Food Authority has more than enough stocks than it can handle. The main rice crop is starting to come in, and it promises to be a good one. By the law of supply and demand, these two factors should bring prices down. But they won't. The reason? The NFA budget high and it cannot sell at a lower price without driving the government deeper into debt.

For this year, the NFA has bought 2.3 million metric tons. Of that total, close to 1.8 million tons have arrived. These foreign purchases account for the bulk of the NFA inventory which stood at 972,000 MT at the end of August. That volume is almost double the level in August last year and more than the rice stocks currently in the hands of the private traders and households. It is enough to feed the entire nation for 27 days. Ignoring the specter of a rice shortage, the Arroyo administration bought a lot more than what was necessary to fill the production gap.

That imported rice is also very expensive. By the NFA's own estimates, the average landed cost of this year's rice imports is P33.37 per kilo. These include costs—for handling, storage, transport and operating expenses—and the break-even price rises to more than double the NFA's selling price of P16.25 per kilo. The difference is, of course, paid for with taxpayers' money. The Arroyo administration avoided food riots and saved itself, at a heavy cost to the taxpayers.

Now the administration is in an opposite fix. With NFA warehouses already bulging with rice stocks, the cessation of its purchase order due starting to 400,000 MT is due for delivery. And the harvest is coming. What is the NFA to do?

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said the government intends to buy 0.6 percent of the country's total palay production. That would be a significant increase from last year when the NFA bought less than 1 percent of the harvest, and a boon to farmers. With the NFA buying palay at P17 per kilo, farmers can be assured of a good price for their produce.

But that is all talk as far as most farmers are concerned. With the harvest only just beginning, farmers from Nueva Ecija in Luzon have been forced to sell their produce for as low as P9 per kilo either because the NFA cannot reach them or because it sets very high quality standards. At that price, the farmers can barely recover the cost of labor and other production inputs, even as they see traders raking in even bigger profits because the price of rice in the markets remains high.

At the height of the food crisis, the administration vowed to do everything it could to increase rice production and achieve self-sufficiency in a few years. That is one going to happen if farmers continue to be at the mercy of private traders. More than seed distribution and fertilizer subsidies, which are often lost to graft or stunted by politics, the government should be able to guarantee that when the harvest comes, farmers will get a fair return on their investments and labor. Otherwise we will continue to subsidize the farmers of Thailand or Vietnam by buying their rice at a much higher price than what we pay for what our own farmers produce.

Risky bailout

RESTORING CONFIDENCE IN THE HOUSING AND FINANCIAL markets forced the federal government to seize control of Fred... Mac and Fannie Mae. The takeovers will keep them from going under and pulling much of the financial world down with them.

Taxpayers assume all the risks to reassure the world that the United States remains a safe place to invest.

FOREIGN COMMENT

Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson promises a new philosophy. The companies "will no longer be managed with a strategy to maximize common shareholder returns."

That's no big surprise. The common shareholders are no one important, just common taxpayers. The Tampa Tribune/Chicago Tribune/Bloomberg

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Moral symbols in politics

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

THE ROLE OF MORAL SYMBOLS IN POLITICS always provides a dramatic starting point for a country's transformation. Figures like Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, Fernando Lopez of Paraguay, Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma and Cory Aquino readily come to mind. In an instant, they symbolize everything that their people aspire to be as a community. They trigger the recovery of national self-esteem and morale.

What moral symbols find themselves reluctantly drawn into politics. Thus did Mexican intellectual Octavio Paz, who had refused to run for the presidency, persuade Lopez, the nominee from the priesthood to the presidency, and he supported Cory Aquino, the economic front finally to affairs to some effect.

Moral symbols are also usually spiritual leaders. They articulate a philosophy of life and a vision for society that goes beyond the politics of any given moment. Their presence in their country is both redemptive and reflective. Their moral authority emanates from their higher than-life significance, and is often their are made to assume the more mundane roles of politics, this cannot be often a devastating situation that weakens the very basis of their authority.

The contrasting between Gandhi and Nehru in India provided itself because where the principal dynamo of labor between those two great leaders. While Nehru, the astute politician, went to work to consolidate and build the nation, Gandhi stayed out of government, preferring the role of watchdog. Although he was an organizer and leader of the Indian National Congress, Gandhi distrusted governments, believing that the only real basis for social order was self-rule, i.e., every person learning to govern himself.

Gandhi exerted a powerful influence on Indian politics, and he did so by exemplifying an overriding moral purpose that no one could challenge. Yet, he understood the demands of politics enough to know when to continue arguing and when to accept defeat, when to fight and when to give in. He opposed the British partition of India and Pakistan from the start, but he bowed to the decision of his party to accept partition. He mediated in the conflict between Nehru and Patel, his two disciples, always concerned to protect the strength and unity of the party. Such is the role of moral symbols. Their power stems from their private disinterest of power.

Moral capital seems in such short supply in politics precisely that those in a strong current to secure moral figures from outside. This is perfectly understandable. But the outcomes can be risky and highly unpredictable. Hindsight measured in macroeconomic figures used by finished the term, Cory's image suffered because of her government's failure to make the country real address the needs of the poor by pursuing a meaningful land reform program. In Paraguay, all eyes are on Fernando Lugo, the ex-bad Catholic bishop who gave up the priesthood to lead the challenge the party of the ruling that held sway in country for more than 60 years. He won.

In the province of Pampanga, all eyes are on ex-Gov. Eddie "Among Ed" Panlilio, the parish priest who accepted suspension from his priestly duties in order to challenge the corrupt political leadership of traditional politicians. In a stunning campaign run completely by non-party formations and individuals, he managed to win by a very thin margin. A recall campaign to remove him from the government displays mostly those launched by his political opponents. This campaign may be getting ground in Pampanga, but in the rest of the country, the "priest factor" and politics versus the image of a moral crusader bent on cleaning Filipino politics.

Because I am a Kapampangan, I am often asked to explain what is happening in Pampanga. People want to know if there is any truth to the charge that Among Ed has not been able to get much to govern. They ask if it is true that his original supporters have either turned against him or left him.

This is how I see the situation in the province: Governance in Pampanga is unchanged, mostly caught in a political stalemate. The party-less governor has been unable to get any support for his programs from the other elective officials of the province. The latter are now more disposed to fight the governor openly because his own party appear disheartened and divided. It is certainly necessary to govern when you are contending on all fronts and you are up against an opponent like Lim, who is not above using all the resources and to the other officials to seek areas of agreement. The last thing you need under the circumstances is to deploy moral righteousness as a strategy for winning your point. Among Ed does not see it this way, and that is the problem.

The Panlilio campaign for the governorship was launched wholly on the basis of a good versus evil contrast. This may be effective as a campaign strategy, but not as a guide to governance. The code of politics does not involve moving from the good and the bad to end the distinction between majority and minority. Thus the key to political success is building a strong constituency around a program of governance.

Among Ed now to the governorship of Pampanga almost entirely on the basis of an urgent need to clean up politics. He won in a three-cornered fight, and he had no preparation for politics. He still seems to be in a panic in politics. Perhaps he gave up the priesthood to enter politics. With the little time left, he must now map out the road to change, ready his forces, reach out to his opponents, and ask his fellow Kapampangans to join hands in confronting the pressing challenges.

Comment is public: bor@gmail.com

Is the judiciary soft on itself?

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

IN WHICH BRANCH OF GOVERNMENT would corruption have the most harmful effects on the country? The executive, the legislative, or the judiciary?

The answer of most would be the judiciary, which good reasons: it is corrupt judiciary would necessarily mean that the legal/administrative mechanisms designed to curb corruption in other branches had been seriously compromised. It follows that the judiciary should come under even more intense scrutiny than the other two branches.

The 2007 Global Corruption Report of Transparency International (TI) focuses on judicial corruption, and the Philippines is included in the 33 countries case studies—countries chosen, according to the report, the problem is "systemic." Also, we have made our own formal study of judicial corruption in the country so as to time that one was undertaken—following the saying that being able to identify the problem is already half the solution.

But the Philippine case study, written by Judge Teodoro Bonoan of TI Philippines, served before his contributing his two cents judicial corruption. There are: political interference, low budget, and salaries (although in fairness, judges and justices' salaries were substantially increased in 2007), witness dependent on donors' budgetary support, inconsistent application of procedural rules, lack of monitoring frameworks, lack of emphasis on moral values in the educational system (don't allow it to be a blanket as one can find), and the backlog and delays in conducting cases. Interestingly, the study was mentioned in connection with the problem of inconsistent application of procedural rules: "Unaccused trial reporting by media for adverse motives, including bribery."

How happy is the backlog, how long are the delays (which presumably is good for the corruption mill, because neither are effected, or exercised, to affect quality of decisions? Or does it depending on the nature of an concerned parties? With respect to delays, Espejo's survey

Because I am a Kapampangan, I am often asked to explain what is happening in Pampanga. People want to know if there is any truth to the charge that Among Ed has not been able to get much to govern. They ask if it is true that his original supporters have either turned against him or left him.

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Comment is public: bor@gmail.com

What is being done to curb it?

Well, the Supreme Court study makes the point that an Action Program for Judicial Reform (AJR) for 2001-2006 was undertaken in 2001. The program included the introduction of plea-bargaining, computerization of records and for case-administration information, including a computer literacy course for all 28,000 judges and employees across the country, with an e-library to boot. Unfortunately there has been no assessment as far as to the success or failure of this program.

But one can get some indication of how successful the fight against judicial corruption is going at the ground level, by looking at how the complaints against judges at all levels have been resolved. Data provided by the Office of the Court Administrator (OCA), which is headed by Justice Jose Perez, for the three and-a-half year period Jan. 1, 2003 to June 30, 2006 show that one Court of Appeals justice, nine RTC judges, and seven metropolitan and municipal trial court judges were dismissed on various charges. This judges is dismissed rate, for the whole period, of 1.2 percent for the Court of Appeals, 1.2 percent for the RTCs, and 0.8 percent for the metropolitan and municipal courts.

Actually, in that period, many cases were filed, but most of them were dismissed. Relative to the RTCs, for example, the report cites the 313 cases filed "against" the defendants. Further down, it is noteworthy that of the 34 charges that were the bases for the filing of a total of 17 justices and judges, only one was for delay. Indeed, only one was for "undue delay in rendering decisions," and only one for "undue delay in rendering orders."

Are the decisions in the above cases consistent with a picture of "systemic" judicial corruption in the Philippines painted by the 2007 Global Corruption Report? Are they consistent with the perception of widespread judicial incompetence in the Philippines? Or, since these cases are resolved by fellow judges, is this a case of the judiciary being soft on itself?

Philippine economic freedom: middling

SOCIAL CLIMATE

AMY ONG-GOLEZ

SHEESHBAT! IS A PRECISE DESCRIPTION OF economic freedom in the Philippines, given its rank of No. 72 among 161 countries graded in the "2000 Economic Freedom of the World (EFW) Report". Philippine Edition," launched last Thursday at the annual conference of Economic Freedom Network Asia, at the University of Asia and the Pacific.

The EFW index of economic freedom is built up from 42 indicators, each scaled from 1 to 10, where 1 marks the least actual freedom, and 10 marks the most actual freedom, to the group of countries for that particular indicator. One can project by end-11th July, 71.5 (from -greater) first, by 14.9 first, rates. The exact methods of the index numbers of the 141 economies graded for order, were used 2000 is at rank No. 71 (namely Rwanda is, rated 6.775, just ahead of the Philippines, not only 6.72.

The top three countries on the EFW index are Hong Kong (8.94), Singapore (8.27), and New Zealand (8.25). The bottom three are Zimbabwe (2.67), Angola (4.10), and Myanmar (4.19).

Five areas of economic freedom. The 42 underlying indicators of the EFW index are grouped under five areas. Index areas of 111 Size of Government: Expenditures, Taxes, and Enterprises, which are five indicators, the most economic freedom is found in Hong Kong, with a rating of 9.1. Under (2) Legal Structure and Security of Property Rights, (seven indicators), the best is Finland, rated 9.9.

In the area of (3) Access to Sound Money (four indicators), the best is Japan, at 9.7. Under (4) Freedom to Trade Internationally (nine indicators), on top is Hong Kong, at 9.8. Finally, under (5) Regulation of Credit, Labor, and Business (17 indicators), concept is Ireland, at 9.6.

Those having 8.0 is common ground, under 5.20 can be called relatively good, ranks 29-56 relatively good, ranks 57-84 relatively middling, ranks 85-112 relatively poor, and ranks 113-141 relatively bad, in terms of economic freedom. From here on, I will omit the term "relatively" for simplicity.

In Size of Government, the Philippine score of 7.1 is 44th best for its Legal Structure, the RP score of 6.8 is 68th, or poor—dampened by 3.4-to-regal enforcement of contracts, 3.9 on impartiality of courts, and 3.9 on judicial independence. In Sound Money, the RP score of 9.1 is 59th, or middling. In Freedom to Trade, RP's score of 7.2 is 46th, or fair.

In Regulation, the RP score of 6.0 is 89th, or poor—notably 2.6 on standard cost of doing business, 2.5 on administrative requirements, 3.0 on price controls, 3.3 on minimum wages, and 4.0 on bribes. The RP report gave no credentials points, but here I could off to one decimal for simplicity.)

Economic freedom within them. The EFW report includes seven of the 15 Asian countries among the seven, Singapore (No. 2 in the rank) has the most economic freedom, with scores of 7.8, 8.4, 9.0, 9.4, and 8.2 in the five freedoms to its respectively—all good, except for no found Money.

Thailand's EFW index is 7.00 (rank 36, fair), making it second in economic freedom in Asean, with scores of 7.1, 6.2, 6.6, 7.5, and 7.1. That is a good on Freedom to Trade, but bad on Sound Money due to lack of freedom to own foreign currency bank accounts both domestically and abroad. The other scores are fair.

Malaysia and the Philippines, both with EFW indexes of 6.72, are tied at rank 72 (middling). Malaysia's low scores are 5.5 (poor), 6.8 (fair), 6.8 (fair), again due to lack of freedom to own foreign currency bank accounts), 7.6 (good), and 7.7 (good).

Indonesia's EFW index is 6.22 (rank 101, poor), with nine scores of 6.6 (middling), 3.8 (poor) in regulation on legal enforcement of contracts), 7.1 (poor), 7.3 (fair), and 5.4 (poor).

Vietnam's EFW index is 5.94 (rank 108, poor), with nine scores of 4.6 (poor—given the economy is dominated by state-operated enterprises, and government secretion exceeds 30 percent of total investment), 5.8 (middling), 6.4 (fair)—due to lack of freedom to own foreign currency bank accounts), 7.8 (middling), and 6.0 (poor).

Mixed patterns. In short, RP's economic freedom have substantially higher per capita incomes, have higher growth rates, and attract more foreign investment.

▶ In countries with more economic freedom, total investment is significantly higher, and private investment is much higher.

▶ The share of income earned by the poorest 10 percent of the population is correlated to the degree of economic freedom in a nation.

▶ In nations with the most economic freedom, compared to those with the least, the amount per capita income received by the share of the poorest 10 percent of the population is much greater, and the life expectancy is over 20 years longer.

▶ Public favor regulations, taxes, and tariffs, economic freedom reduces the opportunities for corruption on the part of public officials.

▶ Political rights such as free and fair elections, and civil liberties such as freedom of speech, go hand-in-hand with economic freedom.

▶ Environmental threats on human health are lower, and economic stability is greater, in countries with more economic freedom.

* * *

The "Economic Freedom of the World: 2000 Annual Report," by James D. Gwartney and Robert Lawson, is available from www.fraserinstitute.ca/publications.

Contact: (905) www.ong@ph.gr.edu or mailto:mailto:golez@msn.org.ph.

Quarter-life clichés

I HAVE NEVER REALLY BELIEVED THERE'S SUCH A THING as a quarter-life crisis, until I felt the stirrings of one in my very restless life. A couple of years ago, I wrote about what I was expecting what I was doing and how noble and gratifying my years was. Today my work remains noble and gratifying and I still enjoy what I do—sometimes. But in the past year, I have had visions of what I'd like my future to be—those that may entail the luxuries of a better life, the problem still is a love spell. I have made it a point to live my life minus the what-ifs. But on dull weekend afternoons when I just want to veg out and think all day about what I'm going to do with my life, I find myself thinking about those things that I'm not sure of.

YOUNG BLOOD

J.A. Espiritu

We want to know what the young ones are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below.—Ed.

Looking back now, I cannot blame anyone for the decisions I have made. I'm expecting a cliche here that many people have used once or twice. We are responsible for the decisions we make and the life we lead.

Several months ago, I was updating myself on my high school friends' lives (thanks to Friendster) and learned that four of them were getting married in the next few months. The last time we met, we were talking about our professions, medical school and our love life (or the lack of it). Now, everyone was addressing them as "Doctor." It made me think of the college applications I had filled up many many years ago. Ma'd wanted me to take up theology and go to med school but I was flat-out against the latter. I still can't understand why. What would have happened if I had heeded his advice?

Then, there are my two other friends who have just finished their graduate studies overseas. It hadn't occurred to me that two years had already passed and they had finished their graduate programs until I saw their graduation pictures. When they first told me about going abroad to study, I felt that I'm never ready for the challenge and I would rather spend the time training money. Now I wonder if I should have accomplished that application for overseas study when I had the chance.

Three of my other college friends are working abroad, each earning more than I do. Good for them, I like it.

Another friend took the plunge and quit her job a couple of years ago. She joined an exchange volunteer program and a few years she seems to be enjoying her life. Taking things easy and slowing down, without any pressures to join the rat race.

I travelled down the same decision of traveling, learning new things, meeting different people, being exposed to different cultures, and building a name for myself in a place where I am indispensable. Now I wonder what happened to those dreams and if I will ever have the chance to pursue them. When will I ever have the guts to go for something that I want?

I must admit I'm a bit of a coward and definitely not a risk-taker. To be blunt-ish, I don't have the right to be asking myself this question. And wondering what my life might have been. Much of what my life is now is a product of the decisions I made. Now I wonder about the students at my school, from classes to time, the courses I wanted. Perhaps I should have learned how to dial. But then again, I wonder if I would have been happy in the end.

Am I happy now? I'm happy that I have my independence. I'm happy that I can pay my bills and go on a shopping spree every now and then. I'm happy that I'm not working 48 hours straight. (Which would be the case had I gone to med school

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Show photo to all 'fat cats'

LETTERS

—BENJAMIN T.
Ermita, Manila

'Lacson, not Korina, linked Villar to road project'

—ROSA ROSES,
vice president, head,
Corporate Communications,
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation,
Sgt. Esguerra Street, Quezon City

UP defends staff from scalping charge

—LUCRECIA ARAMUGO,
executive vice chancellor
and the Board of Regents,
THOMAS O. TE,
vice president for legal affairs,
University of the Philippines

Vitameal has no dehydrated veggie mix

—RUTH MACEY SORIANO,
executive director,
Bellaco de Mesa Foundation International,
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Across the NATION

NEWSBRIEFS

■ TACLOBAN CITY

Rebels warn mayor vs private army

COMMUNIST rebels operating in Northern Samar have warned a mayor against forming a private army "for ensuring" violence in the villages.

In a statement sent...Amando Peñaflor, spokesperson of the New People's Army (NPA) Eastern Leyte Command, insisted that Silvino Lobos Mayor Edmund Gillamac has organized a private army by using provincial government funds.

Peñaflor said the NPA would arrest Gillamac and try him at a "people's court."

But Gillamac scoffed at the NPA threat.

Gillamac denied the allegation in an interview that he has organized a private army. In his favor are payments as of the local government unit.

"That is not true. But if there is anyone who is in connivance for their communist front, I cannot stop them," Gillamac said on Thursday.

Joey A. Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas

■ ILOILO CITY

Cop takes on DOJ chief over Ebel

A POLICEMAN of an Iloilo town on Tuesday filed a libel case against Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera over the press conference and open letter against Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

SPO1 Ben Jolne Reyes, assigned to Ajuy as town, filed the case at the Ombudsman in Manila, through his legal counsel Florido Nava II.

Jolne Reyes said he was being blamed for taking him, during a police program, to criminal activities, including the drug trade.

Gonzalez, according to the policeman, also linked him to a second gunboat explosion that destroyed a police vessel.

Jolne Reyes said Gonzalez started harassing him after seeing him talking with Ilaw Baldago, Iloilo City councilor and son of Gonzalez's enemies.

Gonzalez said he welcomed the filing of the charges.

"I'm the prestige of Jolne Reyes is the one saying. "He said in a phone interview on Thursday.

But Gonzalez warned Jolne Reyes to "make sure the case is worthwhile.

"I can sue him for damages," said the justice secretary.

David Israel Elnar, Inquirer Visayas

3 gunmen killed in clash with cops

POLICEMEN shot dead three armed men Wednesday night in what police said was a "chance encounter" with suspected criminals.

Senior Supt. Ruben Ilagan Tobias, acting Iloilo City police chief, said the gunfight occurred around 11 p.m. at a gasoline station on the city when the three gunmen fired at an undercover policewoman who was strolling there unlucky.

The dead gunmen were identified as Samuel Dino and Ronald Flores, both of Molo district, and Nino Balcoctar of Pavia City in Capiz. Flores carried an ID of the Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Unit (Cafgu).

Nestle P. Bongo Jr., Inquirer Visayas

■ ROXAS CITY

Radioman's murder case hearing mowed

THE PEOPLE'S Television (PTV) here resembles a "Time-in-again" hand of two suspects in the murder of Radio Mindanao Network (RMN) DWR broadcaster Marlo Roque.

RTC Branch 17 Judge Edward Contreras granted the postponement on Tuesday after the witness engaged their lawyers to refer to the Department of Justice (DOJ) the dismissal of their motion for reconsideration filed at the Roxas City Prosecutor's Office.

Lawyer Ma. Florentina Joy Tipo, counsel of accused Jessel Lindsworth and Rodolfo Tan, said they moved to refer the DOJ for review of the resolution of the Roxas City Prosecutor's Office denying their motion for reconsideration.

Felipe U. Cobus, Inquirer Visayas

120,000 Bicol farmers didn't get veggie subsidy, says group

LEGAZPI CITY—AT LEAST 120,000 PEASANT farmers in the Bicol region did not receive any vegetable seeds from the government, the militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas said Wednesday in the wake of the P135-million vegetable scam revealed by the Commission on Audit.

In the absence of lists identifying the farmer beneficiaries, the COA expressed doubt whether the seeds were actually distributed under President Macapagal-Arroyo's "Gulayan ng Bikol" program implemented by the Department of Agriculture.

Bello Pas. ESPP Bicol chair, said the group would go straight to the intended farmer beneficiaries to find out the truth.

He said that among members of the ESPP alone, around 120,000 were not able to receive the vegetable subsidy.

Election funds

She said leaders of the group believe that just like in case of the P728-million fertilizer scam last 2004, the funds used for purchasing the vegetable seeds were used for the 2007 elections.

He said in a statement that it had become a modus operandi of the Arroyo administration to use the plight of the peasants to justify release of funds for corruption and to hoodwink the attention of pro-administration candidates.

"So we expect more of the same scams in 2010 when, as Mg Gib, is being punished now," Pas added.

"We testified in the hearts in consequence on the fertilizer scam and we are willing to do it again on the vegetable scam, but this time we hope that those responsible will finally be held accountable," he said.

Poverty alleviation

At least 16 regional offices of the agriculture department spent a total of P135.3 million last year on various vegetables seeds and planting materials for the program intended to augment the income of farmers during the gap in planting seasons of rice and corn to reduce local hunger and malnutrition.

Three regional offices were in the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Western and Central Visayas, Northern Mindanao and Caraga.

Of the amount, P66.55 million was spent on vegetable seeds while the rest on planting materials.

The beneficiaries in Southern Tagalog, Bicol and CAR were selected, according to the COA report.

The list of names of farmers who were supposed to have benefited from the program, however, carried no addresses, and other details that would show judicious use of the funds.

Gerry Ayala Agustin, Inquirer Southern Luzon

LIFELINE

Miners are trapped at a company operating in Mt. Diwalwal take a breather from search and rescue work in a mining village that reportedly suffered from two landslides. Twenty-five villagers were killed in the landslides and the search for survivors went on with the help of these men.

Negros power co-op blames Napocor for P90-M losses

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—AN ELECTRIC cooperative in Negros Occidental said it had lost P90 million in power-related costs from May to August because the National Power Corp. failed to supply adequate power in its coverage area.

Salpicio Legardo Jr., general manager of Central Negros Electric Cooperative (Cenece), said on Tuesday that the cooperative suffered 225 outages lasting 187 hours, or a shortage of 464 megawatts.

Legardo said the Cenece service area suffered from 58 outages in May, 22 in June, 53 in July and 80 in August.

He added that the Napocor and Sta. Ines Melale power outages have resulted in the lost rice weeks in the shortage to power went up to as much as 11 megawatts.

The ongoing repair of Unit 2 of the Palinpinon geothermal power plant in Negros Oriental has aggravated the load shedding, Legardo said.

Napocor has a contract to deliver adequate power to Cenece but it has fallen short of its commitment and failed to immediately provide generators, he said.

If Cenece could prove that the Napocor charged the cooperative's customers that weren't delivered, the power cooperative would claim payment to refund consumers, Legardo said.

"If Napocor refuses to pay, we will file a recovery suit," he added.

On Tuesday, assigned Napocor president Cyril del Callar said the Napocor would send 35 rent-a-power generators to Negros Occidental.

Baguio dads OK P60M for garbage hauling

BAGUIO CITY—IT'S MONEY flying from the city government's coffers to the private sector.

The city council has approved some P60 million for hauling of garbage from the city to Capas, Tarlac, from September to December this year. The amount is in addition to the P10 million appropriated last month.

Peter Fianza, city administrator, said the city government would need about P75 million, which could be taken from budget surplus, for garbage hauling until it could develop its own dump, called sanitary landfill, project area (BCDA), by January next year.

He said the initial P10 million is already allocated for hauling and tipping fees in August.

Nestor Bonoy, of the city environment and parks management office, recommended that the city develop an RCA as a medium-term development goal for its solid waste, before proceeding to build a sanitary landfill.

She said an engineered sanitary landfill would take longer to develop, taking into account its more sensitive design and environmental concerns to solution to the greater amount the city would spend for such a facility.

She said a technical working group has already identified possible areas for an SCA. Those are in Balacbac in Itogon and Viac in Itogon.

The group, she said, is to recommending Viac because Balacbac is over a fault line and there it an road right of way there so it would take longer to develop it.

She said the Viac site is near the materials recovery facility of Team Environment.

Viac also has a bigger land area of 48 hectares compared to the 18 ha in Balacbac.

Dennis Estrella, Inquirer Northern Luzon

'Alang,' an Ifugao relic, in need of home in London

BAGUIO CITY—AN AUTHENTIC Ifugao rice granary taken to London 52 years ago needs a permanent space to make it more accessible to members of the Ifugao community there who want to be reunited to their cultural heritage, said a British anthropologist.

Locally known as "alang," the structure was exhibited for a year in 1958 at the British Museum.

The granary was brought there by Margaret Lloyd to Benjamin Henry Scott.

But after the exhibit, the alang was moved to another museum and then to the Philippine Embassy until its other closed in London in December last year, said Dr. Peter Dawyer, an anthropologist and former deputy keeper of the Museum of Man.

Dawyer, who was guest at a forum at the University of the Philippines Baguio on Monday said the alang was temporarily placed in the garden in the home of the Perrot family, one of the Ifugao families based in London.

"We wanted to show the rich cultures of people who used the rice terraces when we held the exhibition at London. To be able to do that, we saved a granary," he said.

"The story of the alang is a story of a traveling house. The alang now is in a kind of limbo. We are looking for a space available for everybody to see in its entire form. This is something rich that people will care about," he said.

Cordillera photographer Tommy Hellella said the last belonged to a family in Asipulo. He says he remembered as a boy about the request of the last and the ritual that went with it before it was brought overseas.

"The last also became a shelter

A TYPICAL "alang," or rice granary, cited had been very shabby in the Ifugao. KYM MIRANDA

to of an American military official in World War II. The structure was still in good condition when it was removed. The atmosphere in the community

back in 1958 was sad because the last was to now to their hearts," Hellella said.

Former UP Ifugao Irma Acosta Cariño, who spearheaded its Conditional studies, said it would be important for the alang to find a permanent location.

She said most members of the Ifugao community would want the structure to stay in London rather than have it repatriated to the Philippines.

"The granary has an underlying spiritual value. It was brought there by [the Ifugao] to share the culture with the rest of the world," she said.

"It is also a symbol of culture. It is an important part of rice agriculture. It's important to protect this because by doing so we are preserving the Cordillera way of life."

In other news in Ifugao, the alang is just among the centuries-old structures which are disintegrating along with native huts.

The alang is a smaller version of the traditional Ifugao hut called *fayu* which is made of local materials such as rugan grass, pine and nares wood and bamboo roofs.

Each hut owner in the municipality of Kiangan has one *fayu* which he keeps in the *alang* with the harvested rice.

In Batad village in Banaue, Ifugao, there are more than 150 native houses, including the *alang*, which need immediate restoration, according to residents.

Ifugao Gov. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. said the United National Commission in the Philippines asked him to submit a project proposal to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) that would focus on saving the native huts. Bernice Cullano, Inquirer Northern Luzon

INQUIRER Visayas

Group pushes for tobacco-free RP

'Death clock' installed in key cities serves as reminder of smoking menace

By Joy A. Galvez
Tacloban City

CRISTINA, 45, A businesswoman in Tacloban City has been smoking for years now; so long that she could no longer remember when she started the vice.

She says she could not stop smoking as it helps her relieve her tension or when she is depressed.

"But now, I am thinking of quitting smoking," says Cristina, who requested that her family name be withheld. She consumes a pack of cigarettes a day.

But until she formally quits smoking, Cristina is among the 15.8 percent of 90 million tobacco-smoking Filipinos, says Dr. Shirmar Limpin of the Framework Convention on Alliance Philippines, a coalition of civil organizations advocating effective tobacco control policies for a healthy and tobacco-free Philippines.

The group was in Tacloban this month to launch its "death clock," a 16-feet-by-30-feet billboard on Real and Justice Romualdez Streets. The structure indicates the number of Filipinos who have died from smoking-related diseases. It says 452,400 Filipinos have died from tobacco-related diseases from the time the Yöram Raed Health Warning Bill was filed in Congress last December 20, 2007."

"Death clocks" were also installed in Manila and would soon be put up in key cities like Davao and Legaspi.

Present during the launching was Mayor Alfred Romualdez, who is a staunch supporter of the antismoking campaign. His grandfather, Don Vicente Orestes Romualdez, who was the father of former First Lady Imelda Marcos, died of lung cancer.

"My wife, Cristina, was once a chain smoker, but I was able to persuade her to stop smoking (by) saying it stopped her from kissing her," Romualdez says of his wife, actress Cristina Gonzales.

Limpin says that in the Philippines, 240 Filipinos die every day of smoke-related diseases, such as lung cancer, stroke and heart attacks.

"But what is alarming is that these tobacco-smoking are getting younger and younger," Limpin says.

Based on her group's studies, only 35 percent of smokers in 2005 were 15 to 19 years old, she says. "But in 2007, this number has gone up to 21.7 percent which is really very alarming," she says. She attributes the increase to "peer and advertising influences."

To combat this, Limpin says her group is conducting a massive school campaign highlighting the ill-effects of smoking.

The group also continues to lobby for the passage of House Bill No. 3364 that seeks to mandate the use of picture warnings, instead of text warnings, on both front and back of cigarette packages.

The bill, authored by Northern Samar Rep. Paul Daza, aims to promote a more accurate depiction of "real life-debilitating diseases caused by tobacco smoking through strong warning messages in pictures," Limpin says.

A survey by the Council on Tobacco or Health and Air Pollution of the Philippine College of Chest Physicians reveals that 96 percent of smokers had admitted that picture-based warnings against smoking would most likely make them quit compare to text warnings, she says.

But pushing the passage of the bill could prove to be an uphill battle, considering that antismoking advocates would be fighting an industry that provides billions of pesos to government coffers.

"We have heard that cigarette companies are lobbying with our congressmen from the South for them not to support the bill," Limpin says, referring to lawmakers from the Bicol region where tobacco is a major source of income and livelihood of its residents.

But Limpin says her group will not be deterred in its campaign for a smoke-free Philippines.

LOCAL government units and civil society groups have added their voices to the clamor for picture-based warnings on cigarette packs even as tobacco control advocates in Congress remain hopeful that the bill would soon be passed. —ARCHIVE PHOTO

A GIANT billboard showing this death clock and erected by an antismoking alliance using facial and genetic information, Tacloban City, urges individuals and officials to stop smoking as smoke-related diseases are now among the leading causes of death among Filipinos. —JOY A. GALVEZ

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Are you a liberal or a conservative? Read and find out ...

WASHINGTON—IF THERE behavior you shall know them.

Calm people tend to be lifetruths, and those who react strongly to sudden noises and threatening images tend to be political conservatives, UC researchers said in a study published Thursday.

"Individuals with measurably lower physical sensitivities to sudden noises and threatening visual images were more likely to support having and liberal investigations, the war in Iraq, and gun control," said the study in Science Magazine.

"Individuals displaying measurably higher physiological reactions to these same stimuli were more likely to favor defense spending, capital punishment, the war in Iraq, and the Iraq war," it said.

Random selection

Participants in the study were selected randomly by phone and interviewed to determine if they held strong political beliefs, regardless of which way they leaned.

Forty-six people who were retained for the study were then asked to fill out a questionnaire asking them, among other things, about their political beliefs.

Later, blinking and skin moisture levels, two common physiological reactions to a perceived danger, were measured after the participants had been at a sudden noise and were threatening images—a large spider on a frightened person's face, a person with a bloody face, and a maggot-infested wound.

Those who supported conservative policies such as military spending, school prayer, and the death penalty reacted strongly to the stimuli, while people who backed liberal policies such as foreign aid, pacifism, gay marriage and abortion rights were calmer.

Possible explanation

The researchers went on to say whether political attitudes causes the physiological reaction or vice versa.

But the link that the study suggests exists between the two traits "provides one possible explanation for both the lack of malleability in the beliefs of some individuals and the strong political convictions and for the ubiquity of political conflict," they said.

The study was conducted by researchers from Rice University in Texas, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Illinois, and the Virginia Institute for Psychiatric and Behavioral Genetics. AFP

Texters more dangerous ...

From page A1

belt," Jacobs said.

Mandy Kilhoyne, Automobile Association Philippines (AAP) director, former exec and road advocate said: "Texting while driving is dangerous and can be fatal. Asking drivers not to text while driving does not affect the cell phone industry in any meaningful way since a large majority of cell phone users do not drive."

JP Romero, owner of the Famous Racing School, said: "Phone use is among the Top 3 causes of accidents worldwide, but even a headset is a good idea because the concentration is taken away from the road."

The British study, which was commissioned by motoring group RAC Foundation, also found that the ability to stay in lane was worse than driver distraction from the vehicle in front was worse than drivers under the influence of cannabis.

Slower reaction time

"This research demonstrates how distracting the use of a hand-held mobile phone is behind the wheel," Dr. Senior Human Factors Researcher Nick Reed said in a statement.

"His team said drivers who texted were distracted by taking their hand off the wheel, by trying to read the small text on the phone display and by thinking about how they will write their message.

"This combination of factors resulted in the impairments to reaction time and vehicle control that place the driver at a greater risk than having consumed alcohol to the legal limit for driving," he said.

Don't drive and text

One conclusion researchers made about why texting was so dangerous was the length of time it would take to compose a message while driving.

The TRL said that composing a text message behind the wheel took 63 seconds, in which time a car could travel half a mile within zone zones speed limits and over a mile within motorway speed limits.

Study half of all 18- to 24-year-olds admitted to texting as they drove, a separate survey by the RAC Foundation illustrated. The TRL study selected 17 people from the 18- to 24-year-old age group to take part in a simulated road test, in which they were asked to read, write and ignore texts on a variety of roads.

"The participants in this study were almost unanimous in their view that drink-driving was the most dangerous action on the road," said RAC Director Stephen Glaister.

He said the research clearly showed that a motorist who was texting was significantly more impaired than a motorist at the legal limit for alcohol.

Train collisions

"We responsible motorists would add, and drivers," Glaister said. "We need to ensure that text devotees understand that texting is one of the most hazardous things that can be done while in charge of a motor car."

US safety bloc investigating why a Southern California commuter train engineer ran through a red signal and into an oncoming freight train have confirmed that he was text messaging while working on the day of the fatal collision.

The revelation came just before California regulators issued a temporary order on Thursday banning train operators from using cell phones while on duty. The California Public Utilities Commission unanimously passed an emergency order to ban the use of cell phones and other personal electronic devices while operating a train.

Last week, a Metrolink commuter train was based on from a freight train, killing 25 people and injuring more than 130 others.

Texting engineer

Federal authorities confirmed that on the day of the crash, the Metrolink train engineer was text messaging on his cell phone while on duty. Authorities said he ran a red light and slammed into the freight train in Chatsworth on Friday.

Southern California's Metrolink train service provides rail workers from using cell phones on the job, but there is no current federal or state regulation regarding the use of cell phones by railroad employees.

The National Transportation Safety Board requested the cell phone records of engineer Robert Sanchez after two teenage train fans said they had exchanged text messages with him shortly before the train rail. Head-on Friday with a Union Pacific freight train to suburbs. Los Angeles neighborhood of Chatsworth. Sanchez died in the wreck.

Human error

In a statement issued Wednesday night, the NTSB did not say how many messages were found in the records of 8 engineer, who survived just before the collision.

Messages left with NTSB spokesperson Terry Williams were not returned. Metrolink spokesperson Francisco Claraza declined to comment.

The NTSB has determined Sanchez did not apply the brakes before the collision and ran a red light that could have prevented it. The agency said the tracks and signals were working properly and that human error was to blame.

In 2002, the NTSB recommended that the federal Railroad Administration regulate the use of cell phones after finding that a red train engineer's phone use contributed to a May 2002 accident in which two freight trains collided head-on in Texas. The road train engineer was killed and the conductor and engineer of the other train were critically injured.

With reports from Tessa A. Salazar, Reuters and AP

Roxas urges US ...

From page A1

ROXAS: A letter to Kenny

FY20 million in fertilizer funds for President Macapagal-Arroyo's campaign expenses in the 2004 presidential election.

The US Court of Appeals 7th Circuit has earlier denied Bolante's application for asylum, but he claimed his case to the US Supreme Court in a bid to stay in American soil.

"In the event that the United States Supreme Court denies Bolante's bid with finality, I am writing to seek assistance for Dad immediate deportation directly back to the Philippines and not to the place of origin or to any other place," Susan said in his letter to Kenny, copies of which were given to reporters.

"He should be made accountable for his alleged misdemeanors and misuse of the Department of Agriculture's] funds not only before the Senate but also before the proper judicial, quasi-judicial and administrative bodies," the senator said.

Asked about the letter, the US Embassy said it would be "given due course."

Not to Hong Kong

Bolante has been detained at the Kandaba County Detention Center in Wisconsin for the last two years after fleeing the Philippines when the fertilizer fund scam surfaced.

In a statement, Roxas said requesting the man to his police of origin—said to be Hong Kong—is flying in the face of what he might give him a chance to once more evade Philippine authorities.

"If he is brought straight to Hong Kong, Bolante might be able to escape. Then, this scandal will not be tied, for sure. There will be no opportunity for our innocent farmers," Roxas said.

The senator said Bolante's grave offenses, along with the Philippine Senate's standing warrant for his arrest, "underlie the importance of his deportation back to the Philippines to face the law of justice."

Still probing

The US Appeals Court had denied Bolante's appeal for asylum, ruling that his "fear of prosecution is objectively unreasonable" and that he "has not produced enough specifics or details about the fear of persecution that he faces in the Philippines to carry his burden."

Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez "suggests" that Bolante fly home to face the charges lodged against him at her office.

"If the people here have doubts about [his innocence], I would rather suggest that he return here and face value the consequences are," Gutierrez said in an interview following the launch in Mandaluyong of the Civil Service Commission's "Wire vs. Red Tape," which was held to mark its 108th founding anniversary yesterday.

But Gutierrez pointed out that Bolante's involvement in the fertilizer fund scam was "still subject to investigation" at the Office of the Ombudsman.

She said the probe was still in the fact-finding stage because Ombudsman investigators had to obtain evidence from all over the country.

"We don't know if he's not reached level yet," she said. "It's still with the fact-finding investigators and those who are conducting a preliminary investigation. I can only say that there's [enough] evidence if the case reaches me for signature," she added.

Gutierrez said her office was not sleeping on the case.

Not sleeping on the case

"We only render a decision based on evidence," she said.

Asked if she would meet Roxas to file charges against Bolante even if Malacañang had been linked to the scam, she said:

"No, but then you know, the work of the Ombudsman is to administer justice. If there is evidence, you don't file, you dismiss the case. But when there's evidence, you file it by all means." *Reports from Tarra Quismundo and Michael Lim Ubac*

AAP seeks total ban on cell phone use while driving

THE AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION Philippines (AAP) has called for an absolute ban on the use of mobile phones while driving, saying it was the 12th most common cause of traffic accidents in the country in 2006.

Using cell phones—even hands-free sets,—as the road could impair the driver's concentration and could cause accidents, said the AAP.

Bill in Congress

For the same reason, Bulacan party-list representative Sherwin Gatchalian has filed a bill seeking to penalize persons caught reading or sending text messages while driving.

House Bill No. 4017 proposes a jail term of up to six months and a maximum fine of P100,000. Exempted from the bill are law enforcers, drivers of rescue vehicles and ambulances and people from media.

A number of countries like Australia, France, South Korea and Japan restrict or ban cell phone use while driving. The cities of Manila, Makati and Cebu had banned the practice on paper, but it has not been strictly enforced, the AAP said. Cyrill L. Bautista*, Inquirer Research*

RP: From texting capital to leader ...

From page A1

Social networking is practiced by 86% based communities of people who share interests and activities. Users have a variety of ways to interact, such as e-mail, instant messaging services and blogs. Some examples are Multiply, Friendster, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Live Journal and Blogs.

Favorite reading fare

The Philippines also had the second highest incidence of blog reading among Internet users at 90.3 percent, South Korea topped the blog readership list at 92.1 percent. The global average was 72.6 percent.

All over the world, including the Philippines and South Korea, personal blogs or diary blogs are the favorite reading fare.

About 63.8 percent of Filipino Internet users write blogs, compared with Malaysia, Indonesia

NEWS

Can't find UP students, says Army

CADAPAN

EMPEÑO

Tell that to the Marines, says laywer

By Nikko Dizon

THE PHILIPPINE ARMY YESTERDAY SAID it has exerted efforts to find University of the Philippines students Sherlyn Cadapan and Karen Empeño and their companion Manuel Merino even before the Court of Appeals issued its Thursday ruling ordering the military to free them.

However, Cadapan, Empeño and Merino were nowhere to be found in any Army camp where their relatives and supporters claimed they were detained, said Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr., Army spokesperson.

"We've made efforts to locate the two UP students but we cannot find them. There has already been no effort from the Army even before and we are still looking for them," Brawner told reporters in Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon ...

"We're not saying that they were never in the camps. What we're saying is they are not there now," he added.

The Army's lawyers have yet to receive a copy of the appellate court's decision released on Thursday, Brawner said.

"They are not in our custody but if we find out that they are at an Army camp, then we will turn them over and whoever is responsible for their detention will be charged accordingly," Brawner said.

Brawner added that the Army would refer the decision to the Judicial Guard.

Brawner added that the Army stands by the statements of the officers reportedly responsible for the disappearance of Cadapan, Empeño and Merino although it was also conducting its own investigation, particularly in Camp Tinang in Pulilan and in Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija.

'Bad taste in the mouth'

The UP students' lawyer, Jun Fernandez of the militant human rights group Karapatan, scoffed at Brawner's statements.

"Tell them to tell that to the Marines," Fernandez told the Inquirer in a separate phone interview.

Fernandez said he does not believe Brawner's statement that the Army had exerted efforts to look for his clients as the military had always denied that Cadapan and Empeño were in their custody.

Even if the court's decision was a victory for the families of the missing students and their companion, Fernandez said it still left a "bad taste in the mouth."

Fernandez lamented that the appeals court had required the cases substantial evidence before granting the petition for writ of amparo illegally-the writ of habeas.

It took the testimony of former Bayan-ed Manalo to convince the justices on the strength of their petition, Fernandez said.

Mothers' plea

Manalo, who along with his brother, escaped from military custody, told the court that he had seen the UP students and Merino but that the latter had been killed and his body burned.

"What we're trying to say was they were already detained by 31 Aug. Three days after they have been killed already. In fact, Manalo said that Merino had already been killed," Fernandez said.

Fernandez also expressed disappointment that the court had rejected the plea of the mothers of the Cadapan and Empeño to inspect the Army camps themselves and look for their daughters.

"What do we do with the denial of the mothers? Do we believe them? They testified yet can only say 'No, no, no,'" Fernandez said.

"There's still so much left in the struggle against impunity. It indeed resides," Fernandez said.

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Lim sues aide for allegedly diverting P6M from Pagcor

But Calinisan says charges stem from mayor's ouster from ex-president Estrada's party

By Allison W. Lopez

MANILA MAYOR ALFREDO LIM HAS SUED HIS former consultant, retired police general Roberto Calinisan for malversation of funds and graft for allegedly diverting P6 million from the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (Pagcor) into foundations.

In a six-page complaint filed Sept. 17 in the City Prosecutor's Office, Lim also charged Calinisan with estafa through falsification of public documents and violations of Section 3 (a, b and e) of Republic Act 3019, or the Anti-graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

Lim alleged that Calinisan, whom he hired last year as consultant on police and security matters, conspired with Cebuleño Manansala, Billy Deburia and Rodolfo Soloa in opening Pagcor funds account for the city government to the Ahh Ko! the Hopeless Persons Association.

Calinisan yesterday denied involvement in the money transfer, and told the Inquirer the case initiated from the mayor's removal from the Democratic ng Masang Pilipino leadership (PMP).

Lim said Calinisan's term both leaders of the PMP used its founder, former President Joseph Estrada, suddenly announced on Aug. 20 Lim's ouster as president.

"I have no deal with Pagcor for the release of funds and I have not signed anything. Ahh (Lim) just was grasping because he was kicked out of the party. With [deep sang-ayon] ko huh." (He is agreement) said the current PMP director for special concerns.

Calinisan said the PMP, especially Estrada, supported Lim during the elections for mayor.

But after his election, Calinisan claimed, the mayor did not help those who helped him win.

In the complaint sheet, Lim said Calinisan offered to become his "liaison" to Pagcor. Instead, he said Manansala, Deburia and Soloa, who were not City Hall employees, asked for the release of funds to the Ahh ng Mga Kapansanan (Association in August 2007 and a final tranche in July for the Hopeless Persons Association.

"At the time Pagcor received the letter of respondent Dalotta on Oct. 3, 2007, Ahh for the Hopeless Persons Association was not yet incorporated. It was only incorporated on Oct. 11, 2007," Lim said.

The mayor said that without his knowledge or consent, Pagcor processed the request and released on P1 million checks covering the months of September 2007-February 2008 to the respondents.

No charges yet against official's bodyguards

By DJ Yap

BONIFACIO JIMON PAZ still has not filed charges against his attackers a month after he was allegedly mauled by bodyguards of Presidential Anti-Smuggling Group chief Roberto "Bebot" Villar.

The Makati police said neither Paz nor his lawyer had contacted them about filing a criminal complaint against the men who beat him up on Aug. 29 in the lobby of Dusit Hotel.

Supt. Manuel Santos, chief of the Makati police investigation division, said it was likely Paz's charges had settled out of court with Villar's camp.

Paz, 44, was beaten up by several men later identified as Villar's bodyguards. He was hospitalized and suffered from temporary memory loss.

Although the hotel's closed circuit television cameras did not record the assault, the fight was shown being carried by the bodyguards to some of the alleged attackers, three being arrested one by Bebot's staff.

Hotel guards later identified two of the suspects from photos provided by the Police Security and Protection Office.

Senior Supt. Gilbert Cruz, Makati police chief, said earlier the police could not file charges against the suspects on behalf of the victim as required in police procedures.

Virgilio Bruno, legal counsel of PAGC, said Cesa Villar's bodyguards would present themselves to the police only after they were formally charged.

Honest tricycle driver lands job in City Hall

By Allison W. Lopez

DESPITE THE HARD TIMES, A tricycle driver in Quiapo resisted the temptation to keep for himself more than P50,000 in cash left behind by a passenger.

For returning the money to its owner, Abraham Cariño, 44, was cited for honesty yesterday by the Manila city government.

Cariño received P5,500 plus a job at City Hall from Mayor Alfredo Lim as reward for turning over an envelope containing documents and P50,000 in cash.

Rep. Rodolfo Aquino also gave P5,000 to Cariño for his commendable act.

The mayor, who presided at the People's Day Rotary yesterday, hired Cariño on the spot, saying his act of honesty proved "he was worth keeping at City Hall and will not need money from it."

"With your example, more and more people will realize that it pays to be honest," said Lim.

Cariño said the envelope was left behind by a male passenger and a child who boarded his tricycle around 7 p.m. Thursday on Globo de Oro Street. However, he was unable to trace his passengers when he returned to where he dropped them off after he found the money.

Barangay chair Danny Aquino presented Cariño a citation of honor to Lim after the driver handed over the envelope to him.

The cash and documents are at the mayor's office for safekeeping until these are claimed.

ROLLING STORE
An enterprising vendor offers assorted housewares products displayed in his motorized tricycle (sari-sari) store to residents of San Andres in Manila.

2 firemen hurt in fire at exclusive QC subdivision

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A FIRE THAT RICHT OUT LATE Thursday night in a two-story house in an exclusive subdivision in Quezon City threw a lot of attention after earlier reports referred to the house as belonging to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Two firemen, Camp Aguinaldo volunteer Danilo Dilmas and an unidentified member of the Filipino-Chinese volunteers, were injured after a portion of the burning house collapsed on them.

Quezon City Fire District (QCFD) senior investigator said maintenance Chief SFO4 Joe Nagtanong said they sustained minor burns and lacerations on the body.

Damage to property was estimated at P1 million.

SPO2 Jaime Buscalso, QCFD radio operator, said there was an anonymous caller who reported the incident at around 11:09 p.m. and said the President's house was on fire.

The caller requested for an immediate response to the fire inside the La Vista Subdivision in Barangay Bryard.

Buscalso told the bojones that he dispatched units to the site, but pacing out the fire and preventing it from spreading was the priority. "Confirming the owner of the house was secondary," he said.

Several firefighting units were immediately sent to the high-end subdivision.

After the blaze was put under control an hour later, the radio operator verified the initial report with Enrol 117.

He was told that the burning house was "just near" the President's residence.

Buscalso said the fire struck at 12 Ilonggo St. in La Vista owned by Brandon and Bernadine Gutierrez.

The President's home is located at 14 Basilan St.

Ilonggo said Judge Severo was parallel to each other, their interiors as some point.

"Mrah pala (very lucky) si Madam," (It's not madam's house) Buscalso told the bojones.

Nagtanong said the blaze started from a bedroom on the second floor.

The blaze was put out at around 12:27 a.m., yesterday after it reached the fourth alarm.

"The registered owner of the house (Gutierrez) has been long dead and only a caretaker, Amy Olfisl, was staying there," Nagtanong said, adding they were still trying to determine the cause of the blaze.

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2 suspects in Metro robberies nabbed by Caloocan, QC cops

By Nancy C. Carvajal

TWO MEN WERE ARRESTED for a series of robberies in Metro Manila by armed men posing as policemen.

Caloocan City police head Senior Supt. Wilfredo Macavinta identified the suspects as Fernando "Fernan" Cagaoan, 35, of No. 233 Aroma St., Tondo, Manila; and Bernardino "Bendoy" Mendoza, 32, of No. 258 Libis, Ortega St., Caloocan City.

Macavinta said the arrests, that could be a breakthrough in the ongoing investigation, resulted from a clear video footage taken by a close-circuit television camera and forwarded by the 8 and 8 taxi company.

Earlier, the police identified another member of the group, suspect Celo Cabe, also known as Oliverio and August, but who remains at large.

Cabe was also linked to the robbery last month staged at a money company and a Universal Rural Authority warehouse in Valenzuela City.

The video showed Cagaoan and Mendoza, both armed with M-14 rifles, enter the compound's radio room, take an employee's cell phone and open drawers for safety.

Mendoza was wearing a camouflage jacket over a blue T-shirt with a white band wrapped around his head. Cagaoan was in a blue T-shirt and with a bandolier of M-14 rifle bullets.

The suspects, who received evidence of the CCTV camera, did not find money in the dispatcher's room.

Macavinta said the arrest followed a police manhunt after some 15 armed men broke into the office and terrorized of 8 and 8 taxi on Sept. 16 in Barrio, Caloocan City.

"We hope for the arrests of other members of the group as their records and profiles are now being analyzed by investigators from various police stations," Macavinta said.

The police chief said the video played a great part in the investigation. He urged other businesses to install CCTVs in their establishments.

"The video hastened the identification of the suspects and could serve as solid evidence against the suspects," the police chief said.

Footage of cameras installed in other areas of the taxi terminal showed the robbers from the time they entered the compound in two vehicles.

The latest incident in Caloocan brings to seven the robbery cases in Metro Manila involving the group disguised as military and police personnel and wielding high-powered firearms.

Police intelligence reports identified as brain-behind groups as behind the rash of robberies in the metropolis, using the same modus operandi and sharing members and firearms.

The groups carried the names Alvin Flores, Boy Alberto, Ampao Colangco (headed by an alias "Bogart"), Manny Fuentes and Matanino.

Child soldiers and bandits fair targets

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES and bleeding hearts should stop vilifying soldiers in the battlefield as the bogeyman because a child rebel or bandit and his elders.

If he's carrying a gun and using it as promotional troops, he's a fair target.

It's stupid or fatal for a soldier to hold his fire on a child or a woman who's shooting him in the battlefield.

It's either the soldier's life or the enemy's, whether child or woman.

* * *

In a practical shooting competition at the firing range, a player-aficionado kills "non-client" targets in the form of a simulated assault.

If a player at the shooting range, where life is not in danger, hits targets that are not supposed to be shot, what can you expect from a soldier whose life is on real danger?

If someone who's not supposed to be in the battlefield appears in the soldier's line of vision, can you blame him if he pulls the trigger on the target?

* * *

Will the soldiers hold their fire on the kidnapper of broadcaster Ces Drilon and her companions in Jolo and those boys who lastly tapped four pinoy advocate workers in Zamboanga?

It's ridiculous to consider these children who should be spared punishment or who should not be shot to a pulp/bottle.

If you ask the man on the street, you'll get an affirmative answer: Those young kidnappers are his targets.

If I may give my two cents' worth, these children should be attended to one before they pose more problems for society in the future.

* * *

Cagayan de Oro City Rep. Rufus Rodriguez hit the nail on the head when he questioned the Department of Agrarian Reform's request for a huge budget for travel by its officials.

The department is asking Congress for P676 million in travel expenses for next year's budget.

That amount is incredibly huge for the plane fares of officials and employees of a non-performing agency.

* * *

While most of the country suffers in poverty, some officials of the Gloria administration wallow in wealth.

The brother of a Cabinet member reportedly owns a P340-million resort in Boracay, the biggest on the vacation island.

The high official's brother is himself a government official who reportedly accumulated wealth from his agency.

Both the Cabinet official and his brother are high-profile figures.

* * *

Trees on Mt. Data in Mountain Province and Benguet are being cut indiscriminately by foreigners (duds-and-hats features) and illegal loggers.

Mt. Data is a watershed that feeds into Chico, Agno, and Amburayan rivers and into Ibo Magat Dam that supplies water for irrigation to most rice fields in Central and Northern Luzon.

If the degradation of Mt. Data's forests continues, then will be no water to irrigate rice fields in the future.

METROBRIEFS

4 rob gang suspects linked to Metro

FOUR suspected members of a robbery group, who were arrested last week and are believed to be involved in a series of high-profile heists in Quezon City, are allegedly responsible for at least a dozen robberies around Metro Manila and adjacent provinces, Quezon City Police District Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit (QCPD-CIDU) head, Supt. Franklin Mateo Bistoyong said he needs Cagaoa, Bernardino Bermejo, Angelito Pangan and Titus Picardal had been linked to at least three high-profile robberies in Quezon City early this year including: the P16 million robbery in Visayas Avenue on June 28, the P6.5 million heist at the PC Gold robbery in Novaliches on April 14, and the P800,000 pawnshop robbery in Project 8 on March 14. (Nancy C. Carvajal)

Citycards issued to Taguig residents

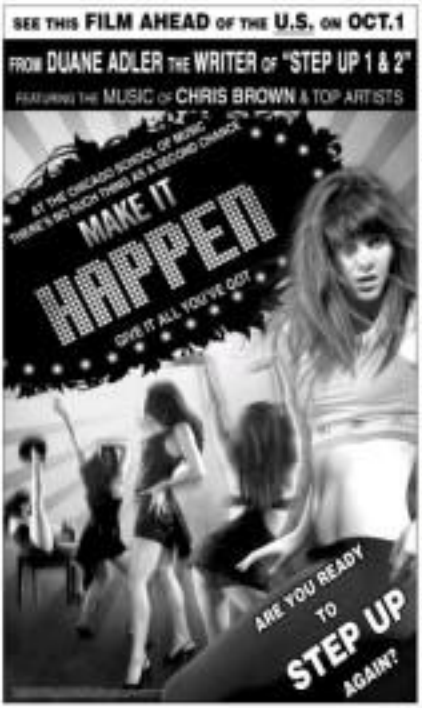
TAGUIG City residents will soon be issued prized ID cards they can use to withdraw money, enjoy hospital benefits and even shop and dine in select establishments at a discounted rate. Residents with a Citycard will save from an easier time conducting other transactions with the city government. It can enjoy/enjoy hospital benefits by withdrawing their monthly salaries. The Citycard was launched in partnership with the Land Bank of the Philippines as an answer to a united identification card system for residents. "Our city has grown for the past seven years. We have to make our constituents feel this ongoing progress. Through the social benefits that they as rightly deserve," said Mayor Freddie Tiglao. Under an agreement with the Landbank, 160,000 cards will be issued for free to the city government's employees, students and residents in the next two years. (Julie M. Aurelio)

Smut DVDs, VCDs destroyed in Manila

APPROXIMATELY 50,000 pieces of smut DVDs and VCDs seized in Quiapo, Manila were destroyed yesterday by the city government as part of an ongoing campaign against pornography. Led by Mayor Alfredo Lim and Manila Police District director, Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales, the lewd materials confiscated by the Mayor's Complaint and Action Team from sidewalk vendors were crushed by a steamroller at City Hall. The discs, which were also pirated, were worth about P50,000. Lim pointed out that while the Optical Media Board focused on the illegal duplication of music discs or videos, the city government has vowed against the proliferation of obscene items in the capital city. "In this campaign we focused on pornographic materials. If (obstructions) are against the law, these items are next to since they tend to influence the youth," he told reporters. (Miriam M. Lopez)

DONATIONS FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim and Unilever vice president for corporate affairs Chito Mercaptal hand out relief goods to families affected by typhoon "Frank" in various parts of Metro Manila. The initiative was undertaken by Unilever Philippines together with various local government units, Department of Social Welfare and Development as well as with Bombo Radyo for their donations to Bulacan. (Contributed photo)



Video of garbage dumping a setup?

By B.T. Natividad

THE PRIVATE OWNER of a military landfill in Bataan, third province said they smell "sabotage" in the accusation that they discharged garbage leachate into an adjacent creek.

Lawyer Andy Santiago, spokesperson for JMMI Incorporated, said Bataan provincial officials should investigate the matter.

Santiago stressed that they employ a recirculation system that captures the garbage juice to run 1,000 square meter ponds, and then salvages back the leachate to the landfill using six pumping stations.

Apart from being environmentally sound, the recirculation system also keeps the landfill's moisture level to be able to produce enough methane gas, he added.

In a statement yesterday, Rizal Gov. Casimiro Ynares III said "the early release of the findings will help put the matter to rest immediately if the allegations prove incorrect."

Liquid milk in China also found contaminated

BEIJING—CHINA'S LATEST tainted product crisis widened yesterday after government tests found the industrial chemical melamine in liquid milk produced by three of the country's leading dairy companies.

The crisis roiling China's dairy industry now took on more international scope, with a recall in Hong Kong and an inquiries from the European Union and the United States over the issue Friday to discuss joint efforts to improve China's product safety record.

The scandal was thought to have been limited mainly to tainted milk powder. Demand for four infant deaths and illnesses in 6,200 others.

But about 15 percent of liquid milk samples taken from Mengniu Dairy Group Co. and Yili Industrial Group Co.—China's two largest dairy producers—also contained melamine, according to a report by the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) posted on the agency's website. Milk from Shanghai-based Bright Dairy also showed contamination.

A CHILD suffering from kidney stones receives medical treatment at a hospital in Hotan, Xinjiang Province, China Sept. 19. Nearly 10 percent of milk samples from the co-op Chinese dairy companies was tainted with melamine. REUTERS

Severe punishment

"AQSIQ will strictly find out the reasons for adding the melamine and severely punish those who are responsible," the notice said. It said all the batches that tested positive for melamine were being recalled.

Reactions were immediate with major Hong Kong grocery chains PARKnSHOP and Watsons calling all liquid milk by Mengniu from shelves. A day earlier, Hong Kong recalled milk yogurt ice creams and other products made by Yili Industrial Group Co.

Starbucks Corp. said its 300 cafés in mainland China had pulled mix milk supplied by Mengniu. Starbucks said no employees or customers had suffered from the milk.

Earlier this week, Mengniu's chief executive officer Niu Gensheng vowed to create a clean dairy product market, saying "If this thing cannot be properly dealt with, I'll resign," according to the financial magazine Caijing.

The scandal began with companies over milk powder by the Sanlu Group Co., one of China's best-known and most respected brands, but it quickly became a much larger issue as government tests found that one-fifth of the companies producing baby milk powder had melamine in their products.

Though most of the dairy products involved are only sold domestically, two of the companies exported their products to the countries in Asia and Africa.

Dialogue for safety

On Friday, regulators for consumer product safety in the United States, European Union, and China met to announce a joint task force to recommend safety issues.

"The attention underscores the need for these kinds of conversations. We must have confidence that our cars reach our in our lives," said Nancy Nord, acting chair of the U.S Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Thousands of worried parents have filed complaints, many fearing sick sons and daughters hooked to IV drips after drinking milk powder tainted with melamine, a toxic industrial chemical that can cause kidney stones and lead to kidney failure. Some 1,300 babies, mostly newborns, remain hospitalized with 158 suffering from acute kidney failure.

Questions continued to swirl about the handling of the scandal by milk producers Sanlu and government officials.

Melamine has an nutritional value but is high in nitrogen, making products with it appear to have a higher protein content. Suppliers trying to cut costs can add melamine to water solutions of watered-down milk. AP

WORLD BRIEFS

North Korea says US reneged on deal

PANMUNJOM, KOREA—North Koreans stopped shuttling its nuclear missiles in Pyongyang and Seoul underlining "thorough preparedness" to restart it, a diplomat from Pyongyang said on Friday.

Ryan Hak Rong said North Korea halted dismantlement of the Yongbyon complex after previously agreed because the US has not kept its end of a bilateral agreement for aid deal. He did not say when Yongbyon would be operating again.

Ryan spoke to reporters in the border village of Panmunjom outside the Demilitarized Zone before sitting down for one-day talks Friday with South Korean officials on unraveling energy and the North as part of the six-party disarmament deal.

The landmark 2007 pact—made with the United States, China, South Korea, Russia and Japan—called on Pyongyang to give up and disable its nuclear program in exchange for the equivalent of one million tons of energy aid.

AP

Israel's 2nd woman PM starts work

JERUSALEM—Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni negotiates on forming a new coalition government on Thursday, after edging home in Israel's leadership contest that will see her become its second Prime Minister after Golda Meir.

Barring those who spoke with by telephone was US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who hopes Livni and Olmert can still clinch some form of peace deal with the Palestinians before the Bush administration quits the White House in just four months.

Palestinian negotiators welcomed her election on Wednesday's poll, though they held out little hope of a major breakthrough.

Livni, a lawyer and the new Kadima chairwoman, faces other battles—in that she will an early parliamentary election that she would probably lose and in Kadima's south party cabinet and the remains of the Kadima administration Olmert will leave behind rather her finally chose more under the weight of a corruption probe.

Should a deal not reach, go on handing rules with the Palestinians to caretaker premier until Livni forms a new team.

Reuters

Zimbabwe leaders feud on cabinet posts

HARARE—Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and prime minister Morgan Tsvangirai are deadlocked over appointing cabinet ministers after reaching a power-sharing agreement, an MDC party official said on Thursday.

Mugabe signed the agreement with Tsvangirai on Monday, relinquishing some powers for the first time in nearly three decades of rule under pressure from regional leaders and augmenting economic crisis.

They met on Thursday to try to sort out roles with get which posts in the cabinet.

"The meeting was inconclusive. It was a deadlock and has been referred to the negotiating teams for further work to try and find common ground," said Nkosana Moyo, Tsvangirai spokesperson Morgan Tsvangirai.

The state-run Herald newspaper said earlier Mugabe had told an meeting of his ZANU-PF party on Wednesday that the agreement was "a transitional".

"Anyone who sees any attempt a permanent position which entitles him to gather more strength as an move into the future. We remain in the driving seat," Mugabe said.

Reuters

Benedict defends Pius XII on Jews

VATICAN CITY—Pope Benedict on Thursday forcefully defended his wartime predecessor Pius XII against accusations he did not do enough to help the Jews, saying Pius "spared no effort" on their behalf during World War II.

The Pope spoke to members of the US-based Pave the Way Foundation, a group of Jewish-Catholic groups which holds regular sessions in Rome on Benedict's 19 Pius, who reigned from 1939 to 1958.

The key impression prepared a 205-page compilation of documents, diplomatic cables and newspaper clippings from the period—some of them previously unpublished—showing Pius did much to help Jews during this era and was thanked by Jewish leaders.

"Thanks to the vast quantity of documented material which you have gathered, supported by a rigorous methodological commission, your appropriation of fact to the public forum the possibility of knowing more fully what Pius XII achieved for the Jews persecuted by the Nazi and fascist regimes," Benedict said.

"One understands, then, that whenever possible his unanimous effort in unceasing in those have either directly or through institutions given to other individuals or from Bishops of the Catholic Church," Benedict told the group at his summer residence south of Rome.

Some Jews have criticized Pius XII, did not do enough to save Jews while the Vatican and those Jews who support him say he worked behind the scenes to help because some direct intervention would have worsened the situation.

Reuters

Iran rejects calls for halt to nuke work

TEHRAN—PRESIDENT MAHMOUD Ahmadinejad said on Thursday Iran would not halt sensitive nuclear work that the West suspects is aimed at making bombs and branded some threats of new sanctions.

Ahmadinejad, who is due to attend the UN general assembly debate next week, also said he was willing to meet with both EU presidential candidates while in New York.

"We are ready to talks that are completely free and in front of the media and in the site of the United Nations with America's presidential candidates," he told a news conference.

Dealing with Iran has become an issue in the November US presidential election campaign, with Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain opening more Obama's stated readiness to talk to Ahmadinejad and other US adversaries if elected.

Ahmadinejad has previously expressed willingness to hold direct talks with US President George W. Bush, that Washington says Tehran must first suspend uranium enrichment before the two sides can sit down and talk about nuclear and other issues.

Major powers have offered a package of trade and other incentives if the Islamic Republic stops enriching uranium, a process the West believes Iran is seeking to enrich to build nuclear weapons. Tehran denies the charge.

Ahmadinejad made clear Iran, the world's fourth-largest oil exporter, had no plans to back down in the dispute.

"Whatever they do, Iran will continue its activities. Iran does not act important," he said. "The use of economic tools [sanctions] to our detriment is not useful." The United States, Britain and France this week vowed to seek harsher sanctions on Tehran over its defiance of UN demands for full disclosure and a halt to enrichment, which may have both civilian and military purposes.

Their call came after the UN International Atomic Energy Agency said in a report on Monday that Iranian stonewalling had brought to a standstill its investigation into whether Iran had covertly researched ways to make an atom bomb.

Reuters

US kept missile strikes a secret

ISLAMABAD—THE United States did not inform Pakistan about a missile strike on militants in an effort to keep Islamabad's public support, Pakistani officials said.

The US military officers said the United States would respect Pakistan's sovereignty, Pakistan's foreign ministry said.

The United States, frustrated by its inability to end militant attacks in Afghanistan, has stepped up attacks on militants in Pakistan with US missile attacks by pilotless drones and a helicopter-borne commando assault this month.

US officials say Taliban and al-Qaeda-linked fighters use ethnic Pashtun tribal region on the Pakistan side of the border as a sprawling base for attacks into Afghanistan.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi told a briefing on Thursday the United States had not warned Pakistan about the attack in advance.

"He never met in Islamabad," Qureshi said. Reuters

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Quirico

Palin's husband refuses to testify

Probe of abuse-of-power case intentionally stalled, say foes

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA—ALASKA GOV. SARAH PALIN'S HUSBAND has refused to testify in the investigation of his wife's alleged abuse of power, and a key lawmaker said Thursday that uncooperative witnesses are effectively sidetracking the probe until after Election Day.

Todd Palin, who participates in state business in person or by e-mail, was among 13 people subpoenaed by the Alaska Legislature's McGinn-Palin personnel campaign spokesperson Ed O'Callaghan announced on Thursday that Todd Palin would not appear, because he no longer believes the legislature's investigation is legitimate.

Sarah Palin initially welcomed the investigation of accusations that she threatened the state's public safety commissioner because he refused to fire her ex-brother-in-law, a state trooper. "Hold me accountable," she said.

But she has increasingly opposed a state Republican presidential candidate John McCain tapped her as his running mate. The McCain campaign sent a legal team to Alaska, including O'Callaghan, a former top US republican prosecutor from New York to defend Palin's head-hunters.

Earlier this week, Alaska attorney General Talis Colberg said the governor, who was not subpoenaed, declined to participate in the investigation and said Palin administration employees who have been subpoenaed would not appear.

Rep. Bill Wielechowski, a Democrat, said the McCain campaign is doing all it can to prevent the legislature from completing a report on whether the Republican Party's vice presidential nominee abused her powers as governor.

Wielechowski, a member of the panel that summoned the witnesses, told The Associated Press that the committee was model testifying for no-subpoena security and that court action to force them to appear sooner is unlikely.

Palin fired Walt Monegan in July. It later emerged that Palin, her husband, Todd, and several high-level staffers had wanted Monegan about state trooper Mike Wooten. Palin maintains she fired Monegan over budget disagreements, not because he wouldn't dismiss her former brother-in-law.

Monegan had gone through a messy division from Palin's aides before Palin became governor. While Monegan says no one from the administration ever told him directly to fire Wooten, he says their repeated requests made it clear they wanted Wooten gone.

Alaska Senate President Lyda Green, a Republican foe of Palin, said Wednesday that the investigation is still on track.

"The original purpose of the investigation was to bring out the truth. Nothing has changed," she said.

Without the testimony, the retired prosecutor hired to head the investigation could still release a report in October as scheduled, based on the evidence he's already gathered. As of Thursday, Steven Rosenbaum had interviewed or deposed 17 of the 33 people he had identified as potential witnesses in the probe.

The legislature does not have the leverage to compel any subpoena to testify before Nov. 4, said Wielechowski, a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Wielechowski said he did not know whether Rosenbaum has enough material for a complete and fair report with so few witnesses. But he said delaying the probe, which began as a bipartisan effort, would only publicize the matter more.

"It would be to appease the McCain camp," Wielechowski said. "They're doing everything they can to delay."

Ignoring a legislative subpoena is punishable by a fine up to $500 and up to six months in jail under Alaska law. But courts are reluctant to force error in legislative matters and the full legislature must be in session to bring contempt charges, Wielechowski said. The legislature is not scheduled to convene until January. AP

All Roads Lead to Araneta Coliseum for Ateneo-La Salle Classic!

500 Bleacher tickets will be sold on game day!

The country's mecca of sports and entertainment welcomes the most exciting weekend of the season as green meets blue for the Championship finals of UAAP Season 71.

Araneta Coliseum will be hosting the highly-anticipated clash between the Ateneo Blue Eagles and the De La Salle Green Archers as they embark the race for the UAAP Championship this Sunday, September 21.

"We are very excited to host another jampacked bout at the Big Dome this Sunday," according to Manny Alexander, Head of operations of the Araneta Coliseum. He adds that security measures have been reinforced to ensure everyone's safety. "Beware of Fake Tickets, and Don't buy from scalpers," he warns.

In order to discourage scalpers, and serve the general public, the Coliseum has set aside, 500 General Admission tickets to be sold on pay-as-you-enter basis on game day, starting 10 noon at the Ticketnet office located at the yellow gate of the Araneta Coliseum," he announces.

Patrons are advised to arrive early to avoid the road.

For ticket inquiries call Ticketnet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph. For schedules of the season's biggest concerts and events, visit www.arenacoliseum.com.

A NOTE for Palin a room for this pair, too. Todd Palin, the Republican vice presidential candidate's husband who's now in the spotlight after he refused to testify in an abuse-of-power investigation of his wife. AFP/FILE

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PHILIPPINE PHOTOJOURNALISM AS SEEN THROUGH THE LENS OF
ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

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Bombers in finals; Cards hang on

By Cedell P. Tipan

MARC CAGIGO KNOCKED IN SIX OF San Beda University's best 19 points as the Panthers came from behind to subdue Letran, 83-81, yesterday and avoid the NCAA men's basketball Finals for the first time in seven years at the Cuneta Astrodome in Pasay City.

Earlier, Mapua capped top seed and defending champion San Beda, 93-74, to have a sudden-death match for the last Finals berth.

Letran in the first three quarters, Cagigo proved to be the difference down the stretch, making his only three-point conversion out of 13 tries for a 10-32 JRU lead with 2:20 left.

"Letran had the perfect game plan, it just so happened that our shots were falling in the end," said JRU coach Aric Vergantiños, who also paid tribute to Letran mentor Louie Alas.

Allen Liwag (team-high eight points, RR13 assists), Cagigo (nailed a free throw with 12 ticks left with JRU ahead, 82-81) and Mark Cruz (19 points, 10 rebounds) were workhorses for the Panthers, who are hoping to end a 16-year title drought.

But the Knights, who even went ahead, 60-58, with 2:03 left on Regie Panaino' key plays of the game under pressure. The scrappy reserved boys stonewalls on a driving Liwag and Carl Mahipol in the game's final moments.

The Cardinals frustrated the Lions with their slow, deliberate style and ended 30 of 50 shots from beyond the arc to build enough cushion when the Red Lions made a late assault.

Mark Pascual scored the Cardinals' only basket in the second half with 3:10 left, before the Red Lions counter within 83-81 on a split by Ogie Menor with 12.5 seconds remaining.

The Lions botched a turnover on the ensuing, but Hong Kindo still snuffed two potential game-winning triples as time expired.

Star Rosas-Alabanza Sara Elevo, who finished with four points, has been named MVP, scorers prize to the outing presents awarded yesterday.

HAPPIER: Mel Andrews Pascual leads down the rebound off San Beda's David Pool Mercado as yesterday's crucial encounter

RP Cuppers drop both opening singles

CECIL MAURET AND JOHNNY NEIL in ten rounds against inspired Kazakh and but others opening singles matches on Friday in the Asia-Oceania Group I competition tie at the National Tennis Center in Ateneo City Kazakhstan.

The pair of defeats moved the Filipinos on the brink of sliding back to Group 2.

The 19 year-old Maurer, dead-tired following a long-haul trip from the United States, won only five games in beating to Early Schukin, 6-4, 6-1, 6-1.

Arcilla, 20, fared tow rosiers, taking only three games in a 6-2, 6-1, 6-0 defeat to Andre Golubev.

The Philippines is banking on the pair of P.J Tierro and Treneck Gobo in today's doubles to win in contention.

"Sorry, ma'am," Philippine Tennis Association vice president Randy Villanueva said in a text message. "The Kazakh team is really strong."

Non-playing captain Cle. Ciando said the Kazakh team is even stronger than the Uzbekistan squad which defeated the Filipinos last April.

Guerra said the 23-year-old Schukin was "too much" even for the veteran Maurer. More Anthony Reyes

ALEX Fernandez, Jiji Fernandez, Chairman Bayani Fernando, Mayor Marides Fernando, Dra. Carieg Santos, and McDo President Kenneth Yang.

KENNETH S. Yang, Jiji Fernandez, Hans Sy at SM City McDo Opening.

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Ateneo-La Salle duel a throwback to Crispa-Toyota

By Jayson W. Paya

IT'S A FAMILIAR REMINISCENT of another bitter feud from yesteryear.

Ateneo coach Eric Altamirano said Seymour Black and La Salle mentor Franz Pumaren, at least—the UAAP championship showdown between the Blue Eagles and the Green Archers feels like a throwback to the collegiate PBA clash between Crispa and Toyota.

"The only thing I can really compare Coach Franz (La Salle mentor) to is the Philippines is Crispa-Toyota, as far as rivalry when Chot (Reyes) really got it," said Black.

"The atmosphere is electric. If you can't get it in Ateneo-La Salle game, you need to look up. Coaches aren't supposed to do this, but every now and then we steal moments, and just look around and say to ourselves that this is unbelievable. Half of the stands is green, the other half is blue and everybody is standing," he said.

And if talks and titter rules were any measure, expect another record-breaking number of die-hard fans to troop to the Araneta Coliseum tomorrow when Ateneo (1-0) faces off with three-Finals series holder (0-1).

"It has become a social event already," said Pumaren. "It's a place where you want to be seen. Dress for success and after the game, it's the social night. If you didn't watch it, you feel like an outcast in the office or in school."

Black, who witnessed the Crispa-Toyota heydays while playing on a PBA lumpert in the early '80s, credited the emotional successful confrontations.

"The rivalries are now built (Crispa, La) Salle-wise—you really have two groups fighting one another," Black said in yesterday's Rotary Forum at Kamuning Padre Faura.

"Back in those days, the personalities involved were very popular. There's (Teasers's) Ramon Aurrecoechea, Nino Fernandez, Francis Arnaiz and Abet Guidaben, Bernie Fabiosa and Abing Co on the other. Those guys were really personalities. They were bigger than actors and actresses in their prime. It was a great experience."

As Black and Pumaren, however, let the competitive nature of both schools feel sponsored the latest basketball team between the Archers and the Eagles.

When asked how the subject of debate which is the better school," said Pumaren, "Sports is another reason for the schools to find out who's better, that's why it's interesting to coach in this time."

"It's about the love schools more than anything else," added Black. "The student bodies, the alumni, our school thinking it's better than the other—it has grown over the years. It also helped that over the years, La Salle has a very strong basketball program and Ateneo also has a great basketball program. So it's only natural that we battle it out on the court also."

PUMAREN Social event

BLACK Unbelievable moment

After Hoya, it's Hatton, Mayweather

By Mars Anthony Reyes

LOOKS LIKE SHANNY PACQUIAO HAS FIGURED OUT HOW HER MARCH TO wards becoming rabid dog promoter will run: Oscar De La Hoya first, Ricky Hatton next and then, if he's up to it, Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Pacquiao, arguably the world's best fighter across weight classes, settled off his roster of opponents to what is now an a retirement parade, one that will kick off with the Dec. 6 bout against De La Hoya in the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

So in interview with SportsSpectacled-cast during light in his training at Wild Card Gym in Hollywood, Pacquiao said he might take on British junior welterweight champion Ricky Hatton next and then last World Mayweather Jr. out of retirement.

"That (a fight with Hatton) is a possibility," Pacquiao said. "If I win this fight (against De La Hoya), maybe Floyd Mayweather will come out of retirement looking for a big fight."

Hatton, who is preparing for his Nov. 22 fight against Paulie Malignaggi at Madison Square Garden in New York, told Sportsnetbeing.com that he is setting his sights on fighting whoever wins between the Ledwaba and Pacquiao.

Hatton earlier told the Manchester Evening News that if Pacquiao pulls an upset, he is willing to face the Filipino superstar at light welterweight (140lbs.). But if the American legend loses it, he will fight De La Hoya at welterweight.

After the dust crashes, Pacquiao, who will turn 30 on Dec. 17, said he will go on to pursuing boxing, just like the 33-year-old De La Hoya, who swore to leaving his medicine.

"It's my plan that after my boxing career I want to be a promoter," Pacquiao told Boxingworld.com. "I have operations coming up on Sept. 26 in San Diego."

Pacquiao's pronouncement practically slammed the door on the resolution of a Pacquiao-Marquez trilogy, though the WBC lightweight champ-elect said he is willing to give Juan Manuel Marquez a rematch as long as he is the promoter of the fight.

Meanwhile, sportsbetsports.com features odds that Pacquiao's only chance of winning against De La Hoya is scoring a decision and that not even that standard power punishing "can beat De La Hoya."

MAYWEATHER His reasons fighting

HATTON Fight at light welterweight

"The Pacman" must set his head movement to make De La Hoya miss with the jab, and then he can step inside. When he gets inside, he means needs to use to two punches. He has got to throw fire, six, and seven punch combinations before his hands tums," said the article.

"Pacquiao has got to throw a lot of punches when he has the chance to do so. He has an elusive but to outwork De La Hoya in this fight. It is not likely that he will be able to score a knockout."

The article added that "trying to impress the judges will not be good enough for (Pacquiao) for to leave them with no choice."

Taekwondo jins, archers give Laguna POF lead

By Jane Navarro

LOS BAÑOS—LAguna recovered from a listless start and pulled off victories in taekwondo and archery to grab the overall lead in the Batch Southern Tagalog qualifying leg of the 3rd Philippine Olympic Festival.

Medal tally	G	S	B
Laguna	10	10	5
Quezon City	10	7	4
Rizal	10	3	11
Quezon	10	3	10
Batangas	7	3	4
F. Pinamar	3	3	3
Palawan	3	3	3
Naga City	0	3	4

Matthew Pinas, Rom Zotomayor and Mary Grace Romero harvested 10 gold medals to overtake the lead, which was held by Quezon City since Wednesday, after the conquest of the University of the Philippines base.

Pinas, 14, notched the output of Catalan's Kim Nelson Tangan after pocketing five golds on wins in the 40 meter, 50m, 60m, 80m 800 and 50-meter round of the color base class.

The 12-year-old Romero grabbed four golds in the 10m, 40m, 50m and 80m and for individuals while Zotomayor joined the same number of golds in the 20m, 25m, 30m and 50-m 900 round of the base freestyle category.

Laguna also sparkled in taekwondo with heavyweight Cyrus Anthony Tolosa, flyweight Daniel Joshua Sauzaglo difference Cecilia, lightweight Ralph Joseph Ele and welterweight Mrs. Mariel Bencelino dominating their weight classes.

Sarah Joy Arellano and Joshua Ivo raked the lightweight and featherweight categories in the senior women's division while Ana Lorraine Atienzar (flyweight) and Jocelyn Ochoa (featherweight) shone in the junior women's side.

Other triumphant Laguna jins were Isabel Grace Lee (archery), Ernesto Medina (Bodies), Luis Jacob Gonzales (lightweight) and Mona Anthonia Jose (wushu).

Laguna amassed 25 golds, 13 silvers and four bronzes while Caraboo, which finished La guna, 5-5, to clinch the under-15 football crown after stopping 22 golds in archery on Day 1, improved its collection to 15-2-3.

Rizal and Quezon City are tied 3rd and 4th, Rizal with 10 golds and Quezon City with 7.

Rizal's Ramon Miguel "Tats" Li-ad and archery Rowena Mendoza took the crowns in the girls' 14 and under and Ronnie Magpantay reigned supreme in the girls' 17 and under.

Let's not allow bums to bully Manny Pacquiao

BARE EYE

Bicab Trinidad

THERE'S THING TO BULLY AND push Manny Pacquiao against the ropes ahead of his monumental match against Oscar De La Hoya, thus making it incumbent upon self-respecting Filipinos to take the side of the underdog of sports romance.

Pacquiao, battle-scarred, could take all those dirty shots, smile, and spit them out.

But, as he has decided to summit a private fiesta for the glory of the Filipino race, we should not allow those dirty shots to go unanswered.

The call of the moment is to insulate Pacquiao's nail for bust.

* * *

Try this dig, definitely below the belt, posted at the Internet on Wednesday: "After Oscar (De La Hoya) hurts Pacquiao with a left hook in the knees, you will see the Filipino doing the semi-blood dance. He might do the Zab Judah crotch-hold dance mixed with some Thomas Hearns wobbly, wobbly. It will be great to see that."

That dirtbike was courtesy of Brutegirl celebrated crazy executive editor Kenneth Cole.

The offender, who must've banged his head liked against the wall too many times, definitely knows how a framed restraint behaves.

"This will make up for what we've had to put up with Pacquiaoism over the years," Lois, wobbly-wobbly added. "It will be great seeing Oscar knock Pacquiao out in three rounds."

* * *

Why Lois, who should've first shed his title as executive editor before going wild, had to go local in order to hit back, at so-called Pacquiaoism, expose the prevailing treatment of self-styled experts whose favorite fighter Pacquiao has either humbled or crushed en route to the "biggest fight of my life" against De La Hoya.

Majority of these boasting critics have since wobbled and say yes, Pacquiao is the finest pound-for-pound warrior in the world.

Both Arum, for one, was a loud Pacquiao disbeliever, swearing a couple of days before the Pacquiao-Hatal rematch with Erik Morales that "no boy will kill Pacquiao."

* * *

Arum, in the run-up to that concluding bout, hardly ran out of words in denouncing Pacquiao's worth.

* * *

How Arum has surrendered and embraced Pacquiao like a favorite son is priceless history.

Anyway, as Arum has been helping sell the Texan Mark Investors Pacquiao and De La Hoya, the esteemed promoter should be told that there's a growing anti-Pacquiao campaign.

The move to belittle Pacquiao could actually be double-edged.

Maybe it's part of the campaign to lure more fans into driving to Los Angeles on Dec. 6 in buying pay-per-view slots.

The other attempt, definitely more believable, is the move to pitch Pacquiao's pitfalls.

* * *

Listen, please. If it is a boilfight, then we are trying to pour and blend Pacquiao to further energy hits.

The idea is for the Pacquiao's foe Ico, sweet like a bleeding bull and hopefully, go wild in trying to soothe his bruised pride during the fight.

Pacquiao must be warned against falling into the same trap that cost him his first fight with Morales.

In that bout, Pacquiao, predictably went blind and jampeaned as he raced and raged for an outright knockout, all the while thinking he could overwhelm the opponent.

* * *

Look, trainer Freddie Roach continues to claim that Pacquiao would prevail relying on superior speed, power and stamina.

But, equal to these gifts, Pacquiao could enhance victory only if he heeds age-old patience and hardship.

He must work equally hard on defense and, just like in the great boxers, be resilient and tenacious in order to survive.

Most fun since Evgeneny his ability to protect himself and survive should spell ultimate triumph.

The Farmers must not allow himself to be bullied against the super-shoot-of-his-biggest fight.

* * *

LIFESONG BIBO: Reinstood Cole, RU Andre Silvanus's basketball coach, has received this roadside from no-friend basketball executive elsewhere No. 1 Ecko: "I observe that your feud with the team manager has gotten from bad to worse. I know you have your own thinking about this looming issue. However, I'm afraid there are certain imperatives that you need to follow. One of these is the limitations imposed by your team manager and the program. I was hoping on your own you would find a way to accommodate the wishes of your sponsor but, to date, what has happened was more conflict and bunching of positions. This being the situation, I regret you owe last chance to accede to the program imposed by your manager unless you can come up with an acceptable compromise with Cynthia Tio, also our sponsor, on this matter. Otherwise, much to my regret, I will have no excuse but to look for a solution that may not include you."(

SBMA Jet Ski Prix today

FORTY FOUR RACERS DESIRE ACTION IN THE OPEN as Ski Council Pro entails participating today off the Waterfront Beach of the Subic Bay Freeport.

Focus will be on the premiere Grand Runabout 1200 Class Extended which is expected to have only a four-way battle among Pilot 88 Polaris, Jet Ski Philippines, Kawasaki Racing Team and Wet Runners Bay Watch, after which all the competing in the prestigious 2008 Winners of Ski Finals at Lake Subic in Zambales.

The racing is supported by Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Administrator Armand Arreza and Deputy Administrator for Tourism Paul F. Wiencko and sponsored by SMART, Courtyard by Marriott Subic Bay and Hotel de Zamboanga.

Shell karting resumes

THE GOAL IS NOT JUST TO GET TO THE YOUNG karters gear up for another challenge on today's sixth leg of the 2008 Shell Helix Karting Super Series at the Racetrack Track at the CCP Complex.

Reigning Junior Karter of the Year Jon Avila will open his quest to be the first Junior Expert class to finally win a title in a hard-to-reach category.

Despite losing in the past two legs, Santos still leads the Rio race with a total of 260 points. It's up on John Alcaraz of Mitsubishi-San Miguel Color-Glenpeb Racing Team.

Nicky Santos of Rmall/Pilsner Racers also moving to second straight win to move up the ladder.

Adding to the excitement is the challenge posed by the defending champion Jon Avila, who has not seriously lost track of Santos.

"It will be a tough Xavier race, but the first I'm ready for that," said Santos.

So, Villamayor end up in tie for 5th

Chot clashes the blood | W refers to Black | 7 Lycan—1-0 | 2 Cabrera—1-0 | 3 Chan (200) | 4 Shamsuddin (400) | 5 Ng (400) | 6 Ramos (400) | 7 Wong (400) | 8 Ellorin (400) | 9 Parapa | 10 Ramos (400) | 11 Lee (400) | 12 Lacbo | 13 Tuang-Lee (400) | 14 Ramos (400) | 15 Lacbo | 16 Chan (200) | 17 Ramos | 18 Ramos (400) | 19 Ramos | 20 Ramos (400) | 21 Ramos | 22 Ramos (400) | 23 Ramos | 24 Ramos (400) | 25 Ramos | 26 Ramos (400) |

Orcollo scrapes past foe

GUANGZHOU—BILLIARDS WORLD NO. 1 Dennis Orcollo capitalized on a costly error by frustrated Tey of Singapore to escape with a 9-7 victory in the opening match in the group stages of the pocketbilliards leg of the Guangzhou Y Ball Time yesterday at the Garden Hotel here.

Orcollo was unbeaten in nine of the 16 frames played before Tey committed a foul on the break shot that allowed the Filipino to run out the last ball and take a 5-4 lead. Orcollo then broke and ran out the next two racks to win the match.

Orcollo was scheduled to take on 2005 WPA world champion Wu Chia-ching of Chinese Taipei next later yesterday evening.

With the victory, Orcollo improved his chances at advancing to the quarterfinal round and a shot at the US$15,000 top prize.

More importantly, the Surigao native boosted his bid for a berth in the lucrative Grand Prix of Indonesia, which will be another event and a qualifying spot to the WPA World Pool Championship. Only the top 10 in the Tour's Order of Merit will play in Jakarta next month and Orcollo is currently hanging on to tenth place in the six-city tour organized by ESPN Star Sports.

It wasn't all good news for the Filipinos as Tour newcomer Rhin Cabanag suffered an early exiting 9-1 setback to Nithirat Kittipanont of Thailand.

Singapore leg winner Alex Pagulayan, WPA World No. 6 Joven Bustamante and Jeffrey De Luna were still playing as of press time.

Other winners include defending champion Chang Jung-lin and Li Hewen. Chang ripped hometown bet Ding Jinhu, 9-4, while Li topped Chris Leon of Malaysia, 9-8.

EUROPEAN Ryder Cup captain Nick Faldo and US counterpart Paul Azinger share a joke during opening ceremonies for the 37th Ryder Cup Championship. AP, INSET

Ryder Cup action tees off

First match: Mickelson-Kim vs Harrington-Karlsson

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY—PAUL AZINGER HAD PAIRINGS IN HIS POCKET and last we'll see it in his stomach.

A day before the start of the Ryder Cup, the US captain acknowledged some moves for the first time all week in Valhalla.

Azinger has done all he can to stop Europe's recent dominance in the Ryder Cup. He overhauled the qualifying process to field the best team. He set the course up just to his liking, and the weather was rough that should yield lots of birdies. He tried to convince his players that the pure...Europe has won three straight and five of the last six—means nothing.

"It's like dotering back a lone sidog," he said Thursday morning, like an archer. "You pull it back for nine years, and now you've got to let it fly. All you can do is hope you've got it pointed to the right direction."

He turned to Phil Mickelson and Jeremy Elsenore the right course, choosing them for the opening foursomes match Friday morning against Europe's double major champion Padraig Harrington and Robert Karlsson.

"The whole team is anxious to play," Mickelson said. "Anthony and myself have been talking about this for some time. I love that we are able to get off in the first group and get out and hit the first shots because again, we've been running this day to come."

Azinger had toyed with pairing home runners players Kenny Perry and Jim Furyk in the opening match. Instead he put Perry in the final morning match with reliable Jim Furyk, but they face Europe's most formidable pair in Sergio Garcia and Lee Westwood. Garcia is 8-0 in foursomes, while Westwood is unbeaten in his past 10 team matches.

"Sergio and I have played well together in the past and talent in a few points for the European cause, so we will be looking to do the same again tomorrow," Westwood said.

Justin Leonard, whose 45-foot putt at Brookline in 1999 gave the Americans their last victory, will play with Stewart Cink against Henrik Stenson and Paul Casey, while Stewart Cink and Chad Campbell take on the English duo of Ashcroft and Ian Poulter.

The final practice day included an inspirational visit by Louisville native Muhammad Ali, who posed with both teams on opposite sides of the golf course. European captain Nick Faldo was so moved that his voice quivered and eyes glistened when talking about meeting the heavyweight champ.

BOXING icon Muhammad Ali (second from left) enlarges American golfers Kenny Perry, Jk Holmes and Jim Furyk for a photograph.

The Americans have not led after any session on any day at the Ryder Cup since winning at Brookline. And they have not led after the opening session of four matches since 1993.

The Americans will be without Tiger Woods, the No. 1 player in the world with 14 majors and 75 victories worldwide, although the US could not rule even when he did play. AP

DONDON Hometown of San Miguel Beer plans to do extra against Qatar's Ali Turyk Ali. PHOTO BY ROMMEL CANLAS/INQUIRER

Qatar Nationals turn back San Miguel Beer

By Romies S. Asuncion

DOHA—A SAN MIGUEL BEER QUINTET that couldn't do anything wrong in the first two quarters couldn't find anything right going for it in the last two.

After an explosive start that saw them leading by as many as 12 points, the visiting Filipino team went cold in the last 20 minutes en route to eventually bow to the tall Qatar National team, 77-62, at the Al Ghanada Sports Club here on Thursday night (Friday morning in Manila).

Disappointed Filipinos who made up majority of the enthusiastic sell-out crowd of 4,000 headed for the exits with still 6 minutes left when the hosts went up by nine, 69-60.

A 14-0 run gave the Qataris, who were Philippine-made jerseys, the lead for good, 53-44, two minutes before the payoff period. They increased the lead to 16 points, 67-51, in the last 8:15.

"We lost our focus and discipline," bemoaned SMB coach Siot Tanquincen. "We failed to execute our interior defense."

Ibrahim Hamdoon scored the game's first two baskets and had four triples en route to 18 points in the first period which the Brewmen took, 25-15.

Ibrahim Pefia, Jay Mladenjovic and Ken Bono took care of the defensive chores, not allowing 6'9" Ali Turky Ali, 6'7" Bilal Ali Saeed and 6'1.5" Hashem Zakhir-based opposition near the basket.

Danny Seigle opened the second quarter with an inside nub to hand the Brewmen, which carried its former name Magnolia Beverage because alcohol-producing companies are not allowed here, their biggest advantage, 27-15.

But sporty offending, a common complaint by visiting basketball teams, the game around near the interval. SMB was slapped four consecutive fouls in a span of one minute, allowing Qatar to close in at 32-23.

"There were questionable calls but those shouldn't justify our loss," said Tanquincen.

Hasa rushed to the court after the match to get autographs and pose for pictures with the Brewmen.

Overeager security personnel, however, dampened the excitement when they pushed the Brewmen away from the fans to, as they later explained, avoid a stampede. Assistant coach Pido Jarencio had to plead with the security men to allow the fans to get inside the players, saying the moments would be squeezed in their total two games.

The scores:

QATAR 77—Saad I. Y. Turky 22, Nasr Y. Bakar 10, Hassan S. Omer 7, Saeed A. Ateeli 7, Ali Ibrahim 10, Saleh Y. Bora 8, Essa I. Gaber 7, Gonzales 0, Mohamed I. Hashington 5, Hegde 2, Pera 0, Custodio 3, Rachid 0

Quarters: 15-25, 32-48, 52-69, 77-62

Keon to flag off Milo Laoag leg tomorrow

RUNNERS FROM NORTHERN LUzon who failed to qualify in La Union will have another chance to make it in nearby Ilocos Norte with the staging of the 13th leg of the National Milo Marathon tomorrow in Laoag City.

About 10,000 runners, 200 of them competing in the premier 21K, are vying action in the race, which coincides with Ilocos Norte Governor Michael Ti. Keon's birthday and the blessing of the newly refurbished sports stadium now named President Ferdinand Edralin Marcos Memorial Stadium.

The blessing will be officiated by Rev. Msgr. Policarpio Alimoa.

A former certified runner who later became president of the Philippine Olympic Committee and chief of Pro-Jove Gaming Ang Keon will flag off the competition at 6 a.m. in front of the Ilocos Norte Centennial Arena.

He will be joined by Nestle APF and Milo Sports executive Bo Eng-Ong, race director Rudy Biscocho and members of the Sandigan Pedestrians.

The top three 21K runners in both the men's and women's divisions advance in the Bauan on Nov. 30 to Manila where four local winners and other qualifiers challenge defending champions Gwenchien Subol and Bonifacio Cachero.

The national champion in both the men's and women's divisions each wins P75,000 plus a glass trophy.

The field of 25,000 is the third biggest in the ongoing 32nd National Milo Marathon held in partnership with Bayview Park Manila, Adidas and the Department of Tourism.

"The big number of participant

SOY. Michael M. Keon congratulates Reynaldo Pascua, last year's men's winner.

shows that marathon is very much popular in the Ilocos Region, particularly in Ilocos Norte," said Ilce Ong.

Julius Semana, the 2006 Milo champion, and Geraldine Sudina ruled the La Union leg last Sept. 14.

After Laoag, the race moves to San Jose City for the 2006 leg, on Sept. 28.

2ND DAY TO GRAB THE BEST GOLF DEALS
13th PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL GOLF SHOW
GDAP
SMX

Chan, Medina top Underbone races

YAMAHA JEFF CHAN AND Michael Medina turned back superbike rivals as they ruled the Ilocos 115-cc. races recently in the penultimate round of the 2006 Sea Ray Caltex Underbone King Champs, reality series at the Batangas Racing Center in Tanauan, Batangas.

Chan struggled hard to squeeze out a close escape in both races for a big sweep over runner-up Mark Bautista and third placer Paul Mark Dalibalo in the Ilocos 115-cc Sports Production class of this event sanctioned by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association.

It started at a tight six man battle at the start but Chan managed to keep the lead and pulled through the six-lap opening race clocking 12 minutes and 53.404 seconds or just a slim 0.024 seconds ahead of runner-up Bautista.

The final race powered equally tough but Chan again prevailed with a time of 12:58.155.

Medina, on the other hand, wound up with a runner-up and a first place finish to capture the Ilocos 115-cc Super Stock crown over Yamaha Corp's Aaron Bautista and Raul Alburquerque.

Yamaha Castrol's Aaron Bautista got back into the limelight following his third runner-up finish stamped Yamaha's 1-2-3 finish in the 150-cc Ilocos Open class together with Yamaha RIDERS Racing's Mateo Bunsis and Ian Cyler Matanguihan Fernando.

UE Fun Run 2008 fires off tomorrow

TO START OFF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST'S 62ND FOUNDATION anniversary celebrations, a UE Fun Run 2008 will be off at 6 a.m. tomorrow at the Bonifacio Monument in Caloocan City. Gracing the event is UE Alumni Achiever awardee Caloocan City Vice Mayor Tito Sotto, a former member of the UAAP basketball champion UE Red Warriors.

SPORTS

Women's collegiate beach volley at Cantada

SIXTEEN TEAMS ARE SLATED TO ACTION IN THE THIRD EVENT OF THE 2008 PCSC Women's Intercollegiate Beach Volleyball Series tomorrow at the Cantada Sports Center. Teams representing Ateneo, Adamson, UC-SI, Benilde and Christian Legacy Academy of Baguio are vying for the one-day event. The event is on the support of Sandugo, Mizuno and Skyjuice Refreshment.

Liga title sweep for Kwarta Padala-Cebu

THUONG CITY—All. RWANTA PADALA-CEBU is etched its name in the history books by masterfully riding the maiden season of the 2008 Smart-Liga Pilipinas Finals Thursday evening Hadhour Center-Taguig, 107-91, in Game Three of the OF Tings gym here.

The Tubes, who also took the first two games in Cebu of the best-of-five title series, completed the sweep with a clinically combination of outside firepower and big finishes.

"This is history, that's why the boys are really inspired," said Cebu coach Topsy Alcantara. "That is for the Cebu fans and the Senior fans, Tubes."

Alcantara said the Tubes had brief anxious moments in the third quarter when the Rwanta Global went on a cross defense.

"But we were able to make the necessary adjustments," Alcantara said.

Star Legend led Cebu with 17 points and nine rebounds.

Both teams shot well, but Cebu dominated the boards, 68-39, the massive gaps, 37 points to nine.

The Rwanta Global never better hoping to extend the series and force a winner-take-all Game 5. Instead they were manhandled in their own backyard and in front of their homecrowd crowd.

Taguig allowed a 13-point deficit to 78-67 halfway in the fourth quarter, but Emery Ayling and Stephen Padilla buried consecutive triples of their own to stop the Rwanta Global cold on their tracks.

Padilla had two three-point shots in a pivotal 12-2 run as Cebu roared a 6-0 deficit into a 17-9 lead in the first quarter.

Coming off the bench, Jaybert Rodriguez drew his team free throws for the Tubes late in the period for a 22-12 advantage and the Taguig Global never ran to count closer than five points the rest of the first half.

PGMS Pucay and Angelo Que celebrate their well-done 70. AFP PHOTO

W.C. QUALIFIER

Que, Pucay rise to 2nd, 2 off Korea

KUALA LUMPUR—THE PHILIPPINES' ANGELO QUE AND MARK Pucay carded a two-under-par 70 Friday and moved into second place, two shots off the South Korea team halfway through the Forty International Challenge here.

Que and Pucay hit all but one of the 18 greens in regulation as they combined effectively to stay in touch with Korean Kim Hyung-tae and Bae Sang-moon, the leaders by three overnight, at the Kota Permai Golf and Country Club.

The Koreans battled to an even-par 72 Friday.

"The key in this format is to keep it in play and try to hold pars," said Que, who is chasing for his first World Cup appearance. "We did that today and hit 17 greens and that's pretty impressive for alternate shot."

Que said they did not put any pressure on each other.

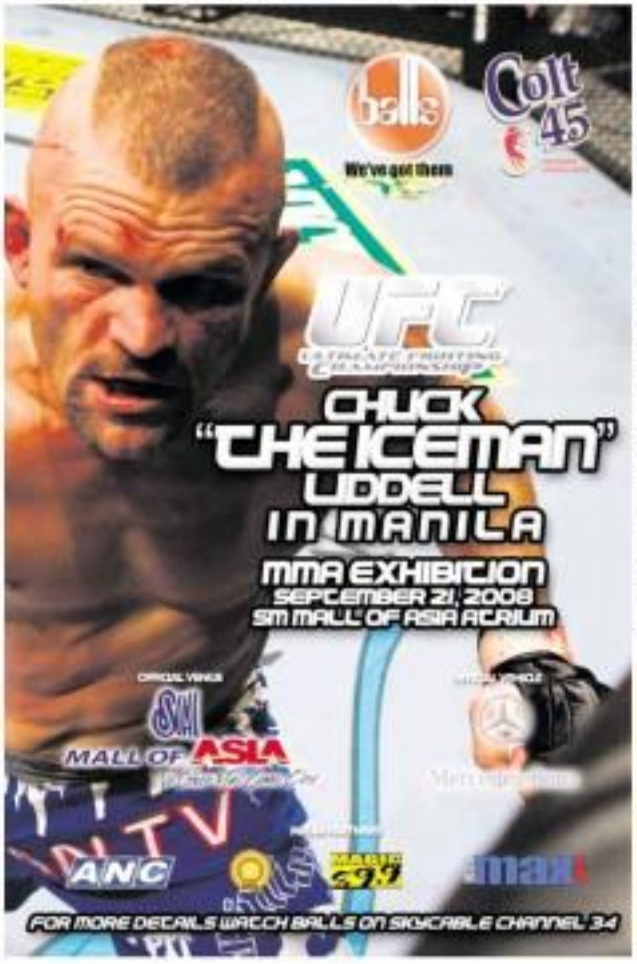
"We complement each other for a good shot and there's no 'sorry' as we just tried to do whatever we could," he said.

Underdogs Nigeria produced the day's joint best round of 69 with Oyebanji Olayinka and Odoh Andrew Ocha eying to stand pace and within reach of one of three slots at stake in the Omega Mission Hills World Cup in China this November.

Myanmar's Soe Kyaw Naing sank a hole-in-one at the 14th hole at his and partner Gan Zaw Lan carded a 69 for equal fourth with Singapore's Bandan Mansor and Lam Chih Hing (72) and Italy's Francesco Molinari and Gianni Michelazzo (71).

A 69 saw Malaysia's Jun Imed and Danny Chia's amateur bank into the frame in eighth place, seven shots off the pace and only four behind third-ranked Nigeria.

Playing foursomes for the first time, Ilam and Jun delivered a roller-coaster day with four birdies, two bogeys and one double bogey to stay atop the leaderboard on nine-under par 135.



Pagunsan, Lascuña falter in Taiwan golf

FILIPINOS JOVE PAGUNSAN and Antonio Lascuña struggled to hit secure Friday and fell out of contention after two rounds of the $300,000 Mercuries Taiwan Masters in Taipei.

Pagunsan and Lascuña, both just a shot off the pace after similar 68s overnight, returned a 75 and a 76, respectively, and tumbled down to 144 and 145, way off the frontrunning 132 of Taiwan's Lin Wen-hung, who fired a sparkling 65.

Artemio Murakami added a 75 to his 79 Thursday, while Jeeno Thitikatra was the only Filipino to make the cut after a second straight 75 at the Taiwan Golf and Country Club.

Lin led the veteran Yu Meichi, who shot a 67, by three with another Taiwanese, Hsu Wong-han, two strokes further adrift at 138 after a similar 67.

Thai Thawatn Wiratchant (75), Australia's Mitchell Brown (71), Taiwan's Kao Ho-sung (71) and South Korea's Kim Nam-kung (68) were at 140, in a tie with joint overnight leader Wisut Artjanawat (72).

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BUSINESS

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Stocks jump 4.7%; peso gains to 46.555:$1

In step with Wall St. rally on US rescue efforts

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson and Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL FINANCIAL MARKETS REBOUNDED SHARPLY yesterday on the back of collective efforts by the world's central banks to calm down global financial markets and an assurance of a very limited exposure by Philippine banks to bankrupt US investment banking icon Lehman Brothers.

The peso rallied to 46.555:$1 in late trading, gaining 40.5 centavos from Thursday's finish. Local stocks also rose across the board, with the main share index gaining 4.68 percent, led by the financial sector which jumped by 7.33 percent.

The stock market's rebound was in step with Wall Street's rally after the US government said it was prepared to offer a huge financial lifeline to ailing banks hit by assured real estate debts.

The move gave local investors a temporary respite as they bought stocks cheapened by weeks of heavy selling.

The Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi) surged 4.7 percent or 130.82 points to 2,862.79. Value turnover hit P3.1 billion with a total of 1.04 billion shares changing hands. Gainers trounced losers 99 against 39 while 39 issues were unchanged.

"But the rebound is just technicalities nature. This is what you call a bear market rally. People just wanted to pare down some of their losses," said Oliver Plana, head of sales at Asiasec Equities Inc.

Since the US subprime bubble burst in August 2007, the Philippine stock market has lost 23.12 percent.

Since Aug. 1 of last year, foreign investors' basis has shrunk by P30.47 billion worth stocks, disconcerting that the P&E indicated.

"Banapinis have been net sellers for the past 11 months. If there is some kind of 'bubblebust,' it's mainly coming from local investors," said Eric Claudio, stock market strategist for Asian Capital Investments and Lime Securities.

STOCKS/B2

FUNDS IN RISK-FREE INVESTMENTS

Insurance group assures policyholders

By Michelle V. Ramos

POLICYHOLDERS NEED NOT worry about the capability of life insurance companies to the Philippines to service claims and other obligations.

The Philippine Life Insurance Association (PLIA) stressed that insurance companies situated in the country were not significantly affected by the ongoing US financial turmoil, which was punctuated by the bankruptcy of investment bank Lehman Brothers.

PLIA said the liquidity position of insurance firms in the Philippines remained healthy despite the financial crisis in the world's biggest economy.

George Mercado, president of PLIA, said investment activities of life insurance companies in the country were highly regulated. for this reason, he said, insurance firms could hardly engage in relatively risky investments.

"Insurance companies in this country are only allowed to invest their funds in government securities, especially treasury bonds, and cash items like time deposits," Mercado said in an interview.

If insurance firms wished to invest in instruments outside of the relatively safe Gov't government securities and bank deposits, they should first secure approval by the Insurance Commission.

"The Insurance Commission is very strict in approving investment activities of insurance firms. Investments should be handled by fund managers that have strong financial backgound, as proven by three-year financial statements, and must be paying dividends," Mercado said.

He said the bulk of investments of insurance companies in the country were in treasury bonds, which carry a long-term maturity. Most bond holdings of insurance firms have tenors of 10 and 15 years, he said.

Asked if there were any insurance companies in the country with an exposure in Lehman Brothers and other distressed US-based investment houses, Mercado said PLIA had no such information.

"If ever there are insurance firms that invested in US banks, the investments are most probably long-term. So, for the time

INSURANCE/B2

BIR seeks lower target for '08, '09

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue wants its 2008 tax collection target of P966 billion slashed, arguing it was unrealistic given the lingering effects of a global downturn this year.

Based on its own estimates, a more realistic target was P889.1 billion or below, or P77 billion lower than its 2008 collection target set by the Department of Finance.

In the estimates it submitted to the DOF, the BIR said the government should take into account the challenges facing the economy this year that might still adversely affect tax collections next year.

The BIR earlier conceded that it might fall short of its P966-billion tax collection target for 2008, partly because of the slowdown in the economy and the tax relief granted to individual taxpayers.

The economy, as measured by the gross domestic product, grew 4.6 percent in the first half, much slower than the 7.6 percent in the same period last year. Economists blamed this on high inflation, which forced consumers to cut down their spending for non-essentials that, in

BIR/B2

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Inquirer's supplement will be inserted in the September 21 issue.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Benguet Corp. seeks FTAA for Ilocos Norte project

By Arcy B. Reyes

BENGUET CORP. has applied for a large-scale mining permit, which would allow the company to explore and, possibly, mine for copper, gold and iron ore in Ilocos Norte.

Benguet president Philip Ilustrisimo said the application for a Financial Technical Assistance Agreement, filed with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, covered more than 50,000 hectares of land, spanning across four or five municipalities in the province.

An FTAA is a contract between the Philippine government and a mining company for the large-scale exploration and development of minerals. The FTAA allows up to 100 percent foreign ownership in a mining project.

At present, there are only two approved FTAAs—those covering the Tampakan Copper-Gold Project of Sagittarius Gold in Mount Matutum and the Tampakan Copper Project of Sagittarius Mines Inc. in South Cotabato.

"We suspect there is copper, gold and iron ore in Ilocos but we still have to do exploration. The Philippine fault runs through the province and where you see those faults, you are likely to see the occurrence of these minerals," he said.

Ilustrisimo said Benguet had already started conducting consultations with the bishops, the local governments and local communities in the province.

In the meantime, Ilustrisimo disclosed Benguet was working on the bankable feasibility study for the King-King copper-gold project.

"We've engaged the services of SRK consulting of Australia to prepare and finalize the bankable feasibility study," he said.

According to Ilustrisimo, the company may spend about $2.6 million for the feasibility study. The feasibility study is expected to be completed within a year and a half.

Located in Pinukpuk, Gonopowela Valley, the King-King copper-gold project is held by Benguet under a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement, covering 1,606 hectares.

Government data showed that the project had an estimated reserve of about 100 million metric tons or 0.385 percent copper and 0.439 grams per ton of gold, with gross value placed at $3.04 billion. The area is expected to have a mine life of 13.8 years.

The copper and gold project will likely require an investment of $402 million. It projected to generate gross sales of $385 million.

Consultations with local communities, LGUs started

Music plans to go into coal venture

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lazaro

CEBU MARBLE MUSIC SEMICONDUCTORS Corp. is planning to diversify into coal exploration and production.

The company has authorized its chairperson to negotiate for possible investment in Abacus Coal Exploration Development Corp.

Abacus Coal will be a spin off company of listed holding firm Abacus Consolidated Investments & Holdings Inc. It will hold in trust the coal mining rights of Abacus Consolidated in Surigao del Sur worth P287.3 million.

Abacus Consolidated earlier said it would enter into negotiations with Music for its possible entry into the new coal subsidiary.

To partly fund its prospective investments in a coal venture and the development of new products, Music is planning to issue 596.38 million common shares out of its unissued capital stocks, company corporate compliance officer Joan Custodio said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange. The shares will be issued through private placement at a subscription price of P0.4 per share or a total of P91.9 million.

Music has authorized its president and chief executive Michael Barrios to negotiate and execute any agreement involving the possible investment in Abacus Coal.

Sources said Music was considering buying a majority stake, or more than 50 percent, of Abacus Coal.

Last March 2008, the company sold 470 million shares through a private placement, which raised P75.2 million ($1,834,146).

The company is planning to sell more shares through a stock rights offerings in the latter part of the year. It hopes to raise $6.5 million from the exercise which will be used to fund the development of a new family of Content Addressable Memory (CAM) chips for networking systems.

Aussie mining firm gets takeover offer

A HONG KONG-BASED Asset management group yesterday made an off-market takeover offer to acquire Medusa Mining Ltd. of Australia for A$381 million.

Medusa operates the CD+D gold mine in Agusan del Sur, in partnership with local firm Philsaga Mining Corp. It owns 90 percent of the project with the local partner controlling 10 percent.

The asset's miserable depreciation was contained at 500,952 metric tons at 13.25 grams of gold per ton.

In a disclosure to the Australian Stock Exchange, Crosby Capital Ltd. said that through a special purpose vehicle, it would purchase all the ordinary shares of Medusa for A$1.15 cash per share. This, it said, represents of a 21-percent premium to the previous day's closing price of Medusa shares.

"Subject to the satisfaction of waiver of the conditions, the offer allows Medusa shareholders to effectively transfer their risks to the Crosby group and realize a substantial premium in cash for their investments," Crosby said.

Crosby added that the offer also "removes uncertainty and avoids the risks over the company's capability to develop and fund its operations going forward."

Crosby currently owns 408,000 Medusa shares, or about 0.28 percent of its issued shares.

Separately, Crosby Active Opportunities Fund, an 82 percent-owned subsidiary of Crosby holds 6.69 million shares of Medusa, or about 4.6 percent.

Earlier, Philsaga said it was planning to ramp up production in the CD+D gold mining project to 300 tons of gold ore per day from the current 250 tons, with a grade of 10 grams per metric ton.

Philsaga holds the mining interest under a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement, covering 2,508.9 hectares of land spanning across the municipalities of Bunawan and Rosario in Agusan del Sur. Arcy B. Reyes

Mining sector keeps positive outlook

THE LOCAL MINING SECTOR is confident it can withstand the effects of the current global financial crisis and credit woes, saying these will be felt for only a short period.

"I am confident the issue will be a short-term problem. Generally, there is still a strong interest in funding minerals development projects. In fact, raising revenues a bright sector," said Chamber of Mines of the Philippines president Philip C. Ilustrisimo.

In a briefing, Ilustrisimo admitted there might be a slowdown in funding activities. Because financial institutions are challenged, he said, access to project financing would be more challenging as well.

"There will be some investors to risk and financial markets will probably have to re-evaluate their risk profiles and definitely, the Philippines will be part of that review," Ilustrisimo said.

"Right now, we're in the middle of a crisis. But when the dust starts to settle, there will be a repositioning and Philippine mining projects will remain to be among those that will merit consideration in financing," he added.

Ilustrisimo also explained that despite the crisis, the "global economy is still growing, and in any growth, industrialization is needed and minerals are the backbone of any industrialization. Minerals have to come from somewhere."

In that regard, the Philippines should be on edge as it has been proven to have minerals, he said.

The Philippines was estimated to have about $1 trillion worth of untapped gold, copper and nickel resources. However, less than 2 percent of about 9 million hectares of land, identified as having rich mineral deposits, have been explored and covered by mining permits. Amy Remo

Stocks ... From page B1

Pliana said that despite yesterday's rally, investors still banished investor sentiment even after some listed banks have disclosed the extent of risk they faced due to the collapse of investment banking icon Lehman Brothers.

"The outlook is still very shoddy. What has been discounted is Lehman's exposure and its impact on certain local banks. It's difficult to factor out the extent of financial ramifications the UK. Unless you are aware of repercussion of the financial problems in the UK, it's difficult to say if we are out of the woods," Pliana said.

Shares of Metrobank, Banco de Oro Unibank and BCBC went up by 13 percent, 8.6 percent and 5 percent, respectively, after the small extent of their exposure to Lehman was reported.

At the currency market, dealers said investors had reopened, but noted that the local markets would continue to be hostage to the US financial turmoil.

"It will be a long-drawn drought from here," one banker said.

The peso closed next to its intra-day high of 46.54 after hitting a low of 46.78 to a dollar. Financial markets in the US and in the region also rebounded.

BIR seeks lower ... From page B1

turn, adversely affect corporate profits and tax collection.

The BIR also submitted its request for a lower tax collection goal this year with the passage of the bill granting tax relief to individuals. RA 9504, which took effect last July, increased minimum wage earners' from income tax and increased the personal exemption of all individuals to a uniform rate of P50,000 a year.

The adverse impact of the law on tax collection was not factored in when the 1954-billion and 1988-billion collection goals for 2008 and 2009 were set, the BIR said.

For a one-year period, the BIR said, the income tax reform would slash P28 billion from its potential tax collection.

The BIR also said the cut in the corporate income tax rate to 30 percent from 35 percent next year would drag down tax collection as this was not taken into consideration when the 2009 collection goal was set. Earlier estimates said the cut in the corporate income tax rate would lower collection by P15 billion for a one-year period.

Insurance group ... From page B1

the investment markets, the market will have already been established," Mercado said.

Mercado's statement supported the pronouncements made earlier by Insurance Commissioner Eduardo Malaki that insurance firms in the country were safe from the liquidity crisis.

Malaki has said that most of the funds of insurance firms were invested in government securities.

Merger not expected to affect RP call center staff

By Sky T. Chikiamco

PEOPLESUPPORT PHILIPPINES has assured all its existing employees that their jobs would not now be affected by a coming merger with Anglo BPO.

Anglo has its Philippine presence at all, so our operations here will actually complement theirs," Federicio Borja, president of PeopleSupport Philippines, told reporters.

Borja added that prospections for the merger would be completed by October.

Anglo BPO is part of the Enso Group, one of India's largest and fastest growing business conglomerates.

Early last month, the two companies announced a definitive agreement to merge through subsidiary Enso Services Mauritius.

Upon completion of the deal, PeopleSupport would be delisted and the new company would be called Anglo PeopleSupport.

Following the merger, Anglo BPO will become a leader in the rapidly growing global BPO market, with operations in India, the Philippines, the United States and Costa Rica.

Based in Los Angeles, California with approximately 6,000 employees worldwide, PeopleSupport serves clients in a variety of industries, such as travel and leisure.

In 2007, the women-owned posted record annual revenue of $140.3 million, up 28 percent from the previous year.

RP urged to pass vital fiscal measures

IMF hopes reforms to be in place before elections

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY Fund has urged the Philippines to pass new fiscal measures that will boost government revenues to sustain the country's capability to handle the current global financial turmoil.

"What we are expecting in 2010, the window for legislative action may close soon," said IMF resident representative Ruta Reijo. "So initiating implementation of the unfinished reform agenda would help secure the benefits of these reforms."

The IMF has been pushing for the enactment of revenue enhancement measures—the rationalization of fiscal incentives, mining and indexation of excise taxes on alcohol and tobacco and oil—backed reforms in the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs.

The IMF believes that the country can attract investments and boost government revenues for the long haul by phasing out tax holidays and replacing them with lower tax rates on corporate income in good enough.

Reform of tobacco taxation—having a single tier system instead of the current four ones, raising the level of excise and indexing it to inflation—would help strengthen the tax effort and bring cohesive taxation in line with other countries, the IMF executive added.

At the BIR, he said key action areas would include reforms in taxpayer registration, assessment, collection and audits. He added that the BOC would benefit from a comprehensive reform agenda.

"Recent economic and fiscal reforms, such as the value-added tax reform, have strengthened the Philippines' ability to cope with externally induced challenges," Reijo said. "The impact on domestic financial markets of ongoing global financial stress would have been greater if these reforms had not been in place."

These reforms had also provided resources to the government to undertake measures to protect the poor from high food and fuel prices.

"Going forward, implementing the unfinished fiscal reform agenda will bring further benefits," Reijo said.

Widely heralded have not abated and risks remain that financial and real sector shocks could be propagated from the U.S. to emerging markets, including the Philippines. The tax effort—a ratio of revenue to GDP—remains a key determinant of the Philippines' fiscal health."

DOE eyes '09 budget of ₱1B for rural power program

By Abigail L. Ho

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY is seeking a ₱1-billion budget for 2009, half of which will go to rural electrification and the remainder to renewable energy resources.

In a statement issued yesterday, Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes said ₱516.6 million would go to the rural electrification and implementation of the government's rural electrification programs.

The DOE aims to provide power in the unserved communities by next year.

The energy resource exploration and development program, on the other hand, would receive the second biggest allocation from the DOE at ₱259.1 million, Reyes said.

"In our country's oil consumption increases, from 13.7 million liters of oil equivalent (MTOE) in 2006 to 13 MTOE in 2007, we have institutionalized several measures to secure our energy supply," he said. "One way to achieve this is to harness our own indigenous energy resources."

In 2008, the DOE plans to launch another Philippine Energy Contracting Round, to encourage investors to engage in the development of coal, geothermal and petroleum resources, Reyes said.

He explained that energy security would be the DOE's main focus in 2009, saying later would all primarily aimed to bolster heights just two months ago.

To prevent the country from becoming a hostage to price volatility, he said, the DOE's plan of action for next year would be "comprehensive, integrated, responsive and sustainable."

In line with this, the DOE would continue to identify the most optimal energy mix—one that would cost the country's dependence on imported oil and prevent it from relying too much on a specific fuel type, he said.

Last year, the country's energy mix was still predominantly coal and oil, which accounted for 44 percent of the mix. Geothermal energy made up 22.3 percent, biomass, 14 percent, and natural gas, 5 percent, according to DOE data.

Reyes said the country aimed to reach 60-percent energy self-sufficiency by 2010. In 2007, it was already on the 56-percent mark, up from 55.4 percent in 2006.

KIA Congressional Launched

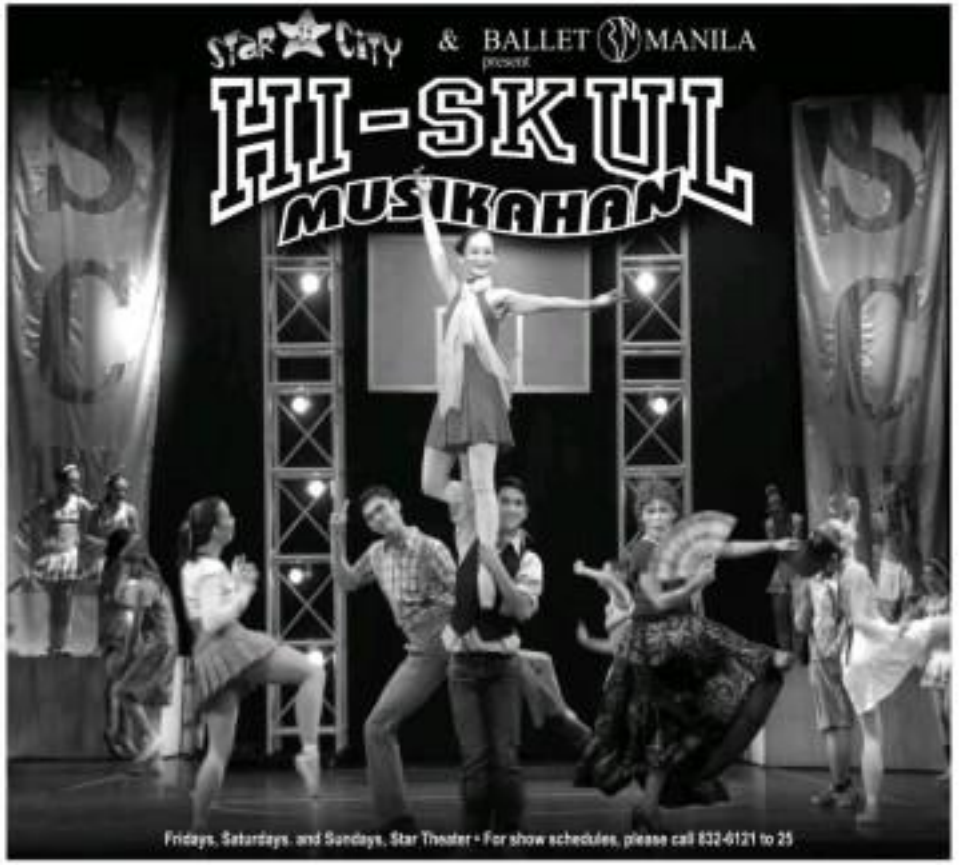
Kia lovers at the heart of Quezon City no longer have to go far as Columbian Autocar Corporation recently opened its newest dealership along Congressional Avenue, the first and only Kia dealership within North of Quezon City that has a full service facility.

Located on 146B Congressional Avenue, Kia Congressional boasts of a brand new showroom facility where test-drives can be easily arranged and customers can avail of Kia's best-in-class financing programs and "trade-up deals. Kia Congressional also boasts of its full parts and service center that can service multiple units per day.

"As the first Kia dealership with a full service facility North of Quezon City, Kia Motors Congressional is committed to bring you the fulfillment of your driving pleasures. We are devoted to provide you the highest customer service satisfaction we can offer," said Kia Congressional President, Nikki Sebastian. "We truly value customer partnerships, which goes beyond your purchase of a Kia, as we extend our uncompromising service and customer-centered offerings for a memorable Kia experience," he added.

Kia Motors Corp. now provides the Philippine market a wide range of vehicles that give buyers value for money in terms of comfort, design, and fuel efficiency. This includes popular and multi-awarded models such as the Picanto, Rio Sedan, Cerato, Sportage, and Carnival. According to Sebastian, "People can expect great things from the Kia brand as Kia Motors Corp. continue to expand in the Philippines and the rest of the region with its range of economical and well-designed vehicles."

Columbian Autocar Corporation is the sole distributor of Kia vehicles in the Philippines, envisions in providing world class vehicles in response to the growing needs and demands of the dynamic automotive market.



SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor Cesar D. Mangosing

A pen that seeks to improve diabetes care

By Charles E. Rukan

IT LOOKS, FEELS AND EVEN clicks like an ordinary pen.

But instead of ink, the prefilled, disposable Lantus SoloStar releases a long-acting form of the hormone insulin (glargine) that lasts for 24 hours.

Indeed, the Lantus SoloStar is changing the way insulin is administered. While a diabetic individual (type 1 or type 2) still will need to inject the pen's tip deep under the skin (in the abdomen, thigh, or upper arm), the pen promises an experience much different if one utilizes the traditional needle and syringe.

"A diagnosis of diabetes often means the beginning of a life-long struggle to manage glucose (blood sugar) levels. Lantus SoloStar provides a delivery options that may be more acceptable and more convenient to use in comparison with other delivery systems, thus it may promote patient compliance," explained endocrinologist Ajahrey Rho of the University of Santo Tomas Hospital.

Now in RP

The Lantus SoloStar recently became available here in the Philippines in the hope of offering over 4 million Filipinos suffering from diabetes with an alternative to the traditional needle and syringe insulin therapy.

When oral medications alone no longer suffice, insulin injection is usually used to control blood sugar in people who have type 1 diabetes (the individual's body does not make insulin and therefore cannot control the amount of sugar in the blood) or in people who have type 2 diabetes (the individual's blood sugar is too high because his or her body does not produce or use insulin correctly).

If not managed well, diabetes could lead to heart attacks, kidney failure, blindness, amputations and obesity.

Diabetes mellitus is the eighth leading cause of death in the Philippines. Ranking fourth worldwide, it is considered to become an epidemic, with the total number of affected people seen to balloon to 300 million by 2025.

One single dose

Lantus SoloStar is the only prefilled insulin pen that allows patients to administer doses from one to 80 units in one single injection.

The pen offers a 25 percent greater maximum dosing capacity compared to other insulin pens.

Lantus SoloStar also incorporates simple, easy-to-read display features, including dial and dose-setting, as well as assuring that is both large and clear, lessening the possibility of injection error.

Barrier

For some individuals with diabetes—elderly or arthritic for example—self-injection can be a barrier to acceptance of insulin therapy.

However, the Lantus SoloStar operates with a low injection force—31 percent less than other insulin pens—that allows a gentle injection.

THE LANTUS SoloStar won an award for its design and technology

"Most doctors, when choosing what insulin regimen to prescribe, consider the patient's insulin regimen, lifestyle and others factors that may affect the ability to use a particular device such as manual dexterity and visual acuity," Rho explained.

A recent survey of Lantus SoloStar's use in everyday clinical practice, involving more than 2,000 people with diabetes (16 percent with manual dexterity problems and 15 percent with poor eyesight not corrected by glasses) showed that more than 95 percent of participants declared to be "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with using the pen to inject insulin, irrespective of diabetes type or previous device experience.

Designers of Lantus SoloStar should further enjoy much of their latest achievement for the pen's form involved: a 2007 Good Design Award from the Chicago Athenaeum Museum of Architecture and Design, which praised the device's combination of sleek, attractive design with advanced, sophisticated technology that will benefit people living with diabetes.

Bang or whimper?

DISCOVER

Maxine Santos Ballon

IF YOU'RE READING THIS, THEN THE world didn't end on Wednesday the 10th like many people were afraid it might.

There was the day the Large Hadron Collider, probably the biggest man-made machine ever designed to run physics experiments to study natural forces in a controlled environment, was supposed to be turned on for the very first time to spin-off plenty, death threats and lawsuits.

The naysayers worried that when the LHC launched in a nearly 27 kilometer-long circular tunnel buried over 100 feet deep in the Alps between France and Switzerland was switched on, the Earth would be destroyed.

Study particle collisions

Built by the European Organization for Nuclear Research, better known as CERN, to study particle collisions between members of the hadron family such as protons and neutrons moving at the speed of light in order to identify the basic components of each, the Collider's huge circumference raised fears that such impacts might open up microscopic black holes that could end the world as we know it.

Several days later, it's clear that hasn't happened.

Instead, turning on the Collider meant sending a single particle beam around the tunnel, instead of two beams circling each other from opposite directions to build up speed before actually causing one each of as particles cocooned together in the LHC. But as the Safety Assessment Group noted in their report, "Each collision of a pair of protons in the LHC will release an amount of energy comparable to that of two colliding mosquitoes, so say black hole produced would be much smaller than those known in astrophysics."

Missing piece of puzzle

Another question scientists hope to answer via the LHC is whether or not the Higgs boson, theorized to be responsible for giving everything mass, actually exists. Also known as the God particle (though perhaps not for the same reasons the fury-filled woodpecker is known as the Lord God Bird), the Higgs boson is the missing piece of the puzzle in the Standard Model used by many particle physicists to explain how particles and forces interact.

And still another question involves understanding dark matter and energy, the invisible portion of the universe that complements the estimated observable 4 percent. Researchers hope to be able to produce dark matter in the LHC, and hope to find particles that will prove the existence of something they can't see.

Scientists have been impatiently waiting for the Large Hadron Collider to power up so that they can start looking for the answers to these and other questions. And now that the Collider is operational, perhaps the next question humanity must pose is whether or not the machine can live up to expectations of its performance.

E-mail the author at maxine@manila.com

Retirement for doctors

By Rahel R. Cuello

MY BRETHREN AND "SIBLING," Dr. Ramon Abanjuez Jr., just celebrated his 80th birthday. At 80, he is still very much active in medical practice and in the academe, and is still one of the most sought-after lecturers on cardiovascular diseases in the country. He still has the spring in his steps and can walk fast uphill, humbling men 20 years younger.

Dr. Abanjuez definitely shows no sign of slowing down. "Retirement? That does not exist in my vocabulary," he says with the most enthusiastic tone. I fondly remember him for since I was a medical luxury at the Philippine General Hospital.

Dr. Abanjuez is just one of many doctors who are way past the legal retirement age, who still look forward to their regular clinics and rounds with their entire heart patients.

When doctors should retire

"In medicine, there is no definitive answer when doctors should retire or what the conditions must be there to retire," says Dr. Rhelito de la Vega, chief, Section of Geriatrics, at The Medical City. "It's really up to the person whether he thinks he needs to retire or if he wants to retire. The doctor has a choice."

Predetirement age doctors are considered like vintage wines. With age comes wisdom. And just like wine, some get better with age. "It's not just the years that really matter but wit and wit patience," says Dr. Zenaida Bagtasbalo, a well-respected neurologist and physical medicine, and a classmate of Dr. Abanjuez. "It's the clinical expertise that we have attained since we began our study and heal that should be considered," she adds.

Still practicing

But still practicing when one has already a litany of medical problems ranging from arthritis to hypertension also comes with physical challenges that patients and conversation alone cannot banish from one's relatively more frailty body. "Yes, our old age may restrict us to do some of the things that we used to easily do previously," Dr. Bagtasbalo admits. "But this should never make us feel less of the physicians and humans that we are. Instead, this should be a greater challenge to us. And surely, knowing how functional and productive we still are, I'm proud to say that it still is true that we can very well handle," she proudly notes.

It's no longer for the money that many doctors decide to practice to their senior years.

"Doctors who still continue to practice medicine even after the usual retirement age are probably those who find a lot of fulfillment," Dr. de la Vega says. "And they feel appreciated because what they have can contribute to the improvement of the community or the country."

ABANJUEZ

At the prime of her life

Dr. Milagros de Lara, 68, is still relatively young compared to Doctors Abanjuez and Bagtasbalo. She considers herself at the prime of her very active life. She is the hospital administrator and president of the board of trustees of the Mt. Carmel Medical Center in Bocaue, Bulacan.

She says patients from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.—admits is sometimes extended hours of 4 to 5 p.m.—she is always on an "on-call" status 24/7 for hospital referrals. Aside from being the hospital administrator, Dr. de Lara is also one of the Community Doctors. With her husband Dr. Lamberto de Lara, she is also acting as the Mt. Carmel Community Center which aims to serve poor families in Bulacan.

"Service always comes first," Dr. de Lara emphasizes. "Plus, it seems like a waste if you will not put your training into good use if you are still able to practice."

It's not only true for doctors but for other professionals as well. Working until one is physically and mentally able to do one's craft can have remarkable benefits on one's mental, physical and emotional state. It gives one the sense of fulfillment of still being a meaningful member of society, and helps prevent depression and anxiety which are fairly common in this age group. It can also help retard degenerative processes that are brought about by inactivity.

"And I can still lift my stethoscope and still talk with sense and substance when I lecture," Dr. Abanjuez says. Stay fit is the answer.

MEDICAL FILES

'Medicinal Fruits & Vegetables' launched

EIGHT OF THE MOST COMMONLY AVAILable and accessible Philippine-grown fruits and vegetables traditionally used as both food and medicine are featured in the book titled "Medicinal Fruits and Vegetables" (somewhat recently) at Top Shelf, 5th floor of Robinsons Galleria in Ortigas Avenue corner EDSA, Quezon City.

Written by Dr. Jaime Z. Galvez Tan and wife Ma. Nebreza V. Miranda, the book details each fruit and vegetable according to its botanical family, scientific name, nomenclatures in different languages and regions, folkloric, traditional medicinal uses, contemporary research findings, food and nutrition values, recommended medicinal use, and botanical and agricultural characteristics.

There are also helpful, easy-to-follow instructions on how to prepare medicinal plants at home by transforming them into decoctions, infusions, syrups, herbal baths, oils, and alcohol extracts.

First 2 editions

The first two editions of this book titled "Fruits and Vegetables with Medicinal Properties" were published in 1983. The December, 1990 revision, supported the publication of the book which was then originally meant for public school teachers and science community health workers.

This updated version, however, can be used by practically anyone already. It is in fact designed to help the ordinary person diagnose the beauty of natural medicine through fruits and vegetables.

Benefiting from technology the books are in Janine Bautista, executive director, DOST-Philippine Council for Health Research Development; Dr. Juvencio Cadiao, director general of Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care; Mabu Gomez, civil liberties and women's rights activist; and Lydia Castillo, Philstar columnist. The book launch coincided with the 60th birthday of Dr. Galvez Tan, a former secretary of health.

PROPERTY

Libo Cesar G. Mangawang

Medium-rise buildings lessen construction costs, says expert

By Tess R. Salazar

IF YOU'RE THE TYPE WHO has fear of heights, then don't feel bravely there. It seems that some developers have this kind of fear, too. For monetary reasons, that is.

For developers, going higher often really means chipping in more money for construction costs. This means more steel, concrete, wiring and other construction materials are required. So, for developers with the "fear of heights," the advantages of constructing medium-rise buildings do sound irresistible.

Gains of going for MRBs

Alejandro S. Mañalac, president of the National Real Estate Association, said it makes frequently the gains of going for MRBs instead of the high-rises.

The fact that MRBs cost less to construct means developers could channel the resources from making those structures complement the "modern lifestyle" of residents/occupants of the building, "providing new world conveniences and a taste of simple luxury," he said.

Mañalac told Inquirer Property that compared to high-rise buildings, lower construction cost translates to lower selling prices which makes it more affordable to a bigger market. MRBs are usually constructed where foundations as single-detached units are no longer practical or economical because of the pricey land cost. Thus, MRBs really fills up the gap between the high rise and the single-detached units.

Not all suitable for MRBs

The catch, however, is that not all areas are ideal for MRBs. With this principle of best use of land in mind, MRBs are only feasible if the cost of land allows it.

Mañalac said that in high-density expensive commercial areas, HRBs may not be a practical option since builders have to recover their land cost basis the number of saleable units which are only be done if they go high.

Mañalac, however, sees more medium-rise buildings in the future.

"This (trend) will even increase more as we decentralize the CBD or create more CBDs. Inspectors may cause transport expenses and our road networks. Condominium living has seen gains into the mainstream of the 90-plus culture, he concluded."

FERNANDO Izquierdo, president of Premier Fiesta Land, with Modesto Arevalo, general manager of FPL Homes

Affordable homes from Imperial Homes

LIVING ARCHITECTURE
Marcos de Guzmanes Jr.

WE HAVE A SURFEIT OF REAL ESTATE projects in the urban centers, mostly handled by big players in the development game. In the suburbs, some smaller developers are likewise making their share. However, in the rural areas and more remote regions, there are very few reliable ones to trust.

Some are less interested in completing the infrastructure than selling off the parcels of land. Others just don't know how to go about it. This, of course, is to the detriment of their target market, the lower-income investors, who have scrimped and saved to buy a dream home, only to be short-changed and disappointed. There must be an alternative to that sad plight—and, thankfully, there is!

25th year celebration

Imperial Homes Corp., a real estate development company that has focused on building affordable homes and commercial sites within the Calabarzon area and its environs, is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. IHC is a family-owned corporation, headed by the indefatigable Emma Imperial.

Under the IHC wing is the Premier Fiesta Land, headed by Fernand Imperial, which is directly involved in the building of quality low-cost homes. The company has carved a niche for itself by building affordable homes in the provinces, particularly in the Calabarzon area, at prices that ordinary working people can handle. Although profit margins are low, this is where they continue to make a difference.

WOMAN on top: Emma Imperial

"Years ago, Emma realized that a lot of our overseas contract workers come from the areas south of Manila. It was only logical to assume that they would want to invest in properties close to their hometowns, their own region and communities. So, IHC decided to give them the option of owning a better home for their family near the community they were comfortable in, as prices within their reach.

Value-for-money projects

Instead of competing with the bigger guns in the big cities, IHC addressed the need of the professional folk (particularly scrimping and saving to buy their first home) by providing value-for-money projects.

To that, the company has committed to delivering value-for-money projects and at the same time, upgrading the surrounding community. To date, IHC has ongoing developments like Casa Calderona in Los Baños and Tagaytay Meridian in Cavite, to name a few.

In this milestone year, IHC wants to create a bigger social impact through the eventual additions of more environment-friendly features in their projects. These include technologies inherent rainwater to naturally reused, more eco-friendly materials are utilized, and proper design minimizes the use of energy. The company believes that it does not matter what matters in life you are in, because everyone must do his part to preserve and support nature.

Don Heredia big developer is quoted as saying, "I can erect high-rise buildings, but I cannot do what Emma is doing, to lay affordable homes." The higher overhead costs of publicly listed companies create uncertainties when undertaking projects that are geared toward the common provinces. Their directors and shareholders may not see these ventures as profitable enough. IHC, on the other hand, being still wholly family-owned, can tend close to ones those issues.

However, Emma is smiling over a business formula that would ensure that if her company goes public, the product she offers will still be relevant to the furthest or remotest areas of our country, providing options for low-budget or middle-income homeowners as well as local or international tourists, while also satisfying the concerns of her shareholders. She says, "I think that when you have the good of others in mind, you will always succeed." Wise words to live by indeed.

For your comments, please send e-mail to mes realtygurus@yahoo.com.

NEW BEGINNINGS IN BEL ALDEA
San Miguel Properties Inc., the property arm of conglomerate San Miguel Corp., recently broke ground for a new phase in its fast-selling townhouse development in the South, Bel Aldea. Leading the ground-breaking ceremonies are (from left) Julio S. Jalandoni, head of operations; Karen V. Ramos, head of sales and marketing, and architect Alan B. Cruz, head of townhouse development. Located in Ciudad de Bel, Cavite, Bel Aldea features two-at-one townhouses averaging 61 to 62 sq m in area and 61 to 63 sq m floor area. Units are priced as low as P680,000 or PT,717.81 per month through Pag-ibig loan. A 45-60 minute drive from Makati and Ortigas, Bel Aldea is an ideal community for start-up families as well as employees working in nearby business parks and industrial estates.

Presidio the crowning glory of bayside living

THERE IS MUCH TO BE SAID about living the dream. But some people, it can be as lavish as going around the world, driving the latest car and shopping to their heart's content. For others, it can also be as simple and down to earth as finding a great place to live in, somewhere pleasantly modern and laidback with ample room to grow and move about.

What if you and your family can wake up one lovely dream every day? Crown Asia, a subsidiary of the country's biggest home builder, Megaland and Urbanpro Inc., has just the right place where you can live your dream and then some.

Presidio, a vertical development consisting of multilevel condominiums at the heart of the master-planned development of Lakefront, is offering just what the discerning urban soon and into a community inspired by one of the world's most beloved cities, San Francisco.

Blending privacy, accessibility

This enticing township development of 15 Neo-Hispanic residential towers complemented by commercial facilities successfully strikes a balance between privacy and accessibility and serene and cosmopolitan living by virtue of its strategic location.

Crown Asia raises the bar on sub-urban vertical living with Presidio by harmoniously melding fine residential and commercial attributes into one masterfully planned development. Smarter homeowners will find that Presidio offers the right mix of vibrancy and serenity set amid to their lifestyle, because while they want to get away from the city, they know that the things that matter are well within reach. And Crown Asia President Ulah Villa.

Conveniently located in Susana, Macadatapa, Presidio is just a few minutes away from the country's premiere business districts. Whether you work in Ortigas or Bonifacio Global City or your kids go to school in Makati or Alabang, home is comfortably accessible from the South Luzon Expressway, the East Service Road, a leisurely drive from the Coastal Road, the C-5 Coastal Road that will happily take you all the way north to Marikina, and the Manila South Railway that spans from Clark, Pampanga to Bicol. It also affords residents ready access to commercial centers, schools, hospitals and the airport which is merely 20 minutes away.

Panorama of visual treat

Despite its proximity to bustling city centers, Presidio is never too far away from nature. The impressive layout of its vertical elements presents residents with picturesque views from their unit, whether it's the mostly shimmering collection over Laguna Bay or the breathtaking panorama of the historic Makiling mountain. Lavish landscaping, courtyards and pocket gardens in the premises complement Presidio's refined finishing.

True to its theme, Presidio evokes that distinct Neo-Hispanic style so identified with San Francisco. Each tower is distinguished by its use of bay windows, balconies and space for generous, thoughtful planning. Design details like gable towers, shingled roofs and intricate balconies work also add to Presidio's unmistakable bay area charm.

Some architectural elements are creatively incorporated in the façade of the mixed-use condos. In Mar, Sentosa, Bellini and Granvue—the five towers with commercial spaces on the ground floor and residential units on the upper floors. They also appear on the garden condo residences Fresno, Renato, Michaelangelo and Monte—T-shaped mid-rise towers that offer a grand view of the township's gardens and lakes. Meanwhile, the office of the three towers at 12 stories high offers the best view of the bay and mountains.

Conveniences of modern living

Residents of these and soon-to-rise towers can take full advantage of Presidio's amenities. As the Village Center, they can spend hours refreshing around in the swimming pool. They can head over to the multipurpose suites and game room for some friendly competition.

Parks, playgrounds and wide sidewalks are ideal for jogging and lounging outdoors. There's also a fitness center for those who want to squeeze in a workout after a hard day at the office. Other amenities include a theater, tennis, clubhouse with a social hall and function rooms for events, plus 24-hour security, a centralized drop well. And covered walks.

Those searching for chips and soda in the near hours of the morning can pop by the newly opened 7-Eleven branch conveniently located at Presidio's ground level. This is part of the Town Center where a collection of restaurants, retail outlets and specialty shops will open and indulge the residents' whims all within the exclusive Presidio enclave. Imagine the practical convenience of having a sumptuous dinner out, shopping for household stuff and running errands within steps of your residence. This is one neighborhood you'll want to call home.

"Whether it's the view of a new tower, or a new store opening within its vicinity, there is always something to look forward to at Presidio. Situated by Crown Asia, the "City by the Bay" will keep on growing with years and vigor to enrich the lives of its residents," Villa concluded.

Attracting homebuyers to Cavite

By Charles E. Bahas

IMAGINE YOURSELF SPENDING SIXTY-SEVEN a hotel room window approximately 60 kilometers away from Metro Manila.

Outside you could see the sprawling landscape of golf courses designed by Jack Nicklaus, Andy Dye, Nick Faldo and Greg Norman.

You are, in fact, inside the Hillcrest Eagle Ridge in Gen. Trias, Cavite—a place envisioned to become a "micro-city for Philippine golf."

FROM THE OUTSIDE, the structure adopts Hillcrest's conventional design consisting of overarching crossed ridge facade with bright hues to draw in residents with a warm and welcoming ambiance of a country home.

"This hotel not only offers a scenic environment that is so ideal for taking a break from the hustle and bustle of the city but also provides a glimpse of what life awaits you should you decide to live in this part of Cavite," explained Normark Bautista, area GM of Hillcrest Inn and Suites for South Luzon.

Hillcrest Eagle Ridge is one of the 10 properties of Hillcrest Inn and Suites in the country.

Practical environment

"The contemporary conventional elegance and practical environment are complemented with guests' approval.

A PRACTICAL living space is provided by each room.

"Considering that Cavite is a historic, picturesque and scenic province that provides a place conducive to both business and leisure, it is also economically feasible. For advertising, a special package for tourism students that provide an ecological tour site in its choice of more than 300 affordable hotels open and under construction worldwide," he said.

The attraction of Hillcrest Eagle Ridge extends out of its comfort zone by providing special activities and projects that their guests can exchange and enjoy.

"Our hotel is surrounded by a lot of interesting, unique and historical sites. Aside from golfing, we also provide a lot of things to see here in Cavite," he added.

Cavite's prime plantations, restaurants and famous casa-style packages range from P1,950 to P3,250 per person," Bautista said.

Stay and Learn

Aside from the usual, there is also a Stay and Learn package that provides a two-days and one-night stay-in training and learning program for Tourism and HRM students.

It includes free lectures on hotel operations and hands-on training complemented with access to Eagle Ridge Sports Club's amenities for their leisure time.

Another group that the hotel caters to is the vast market of growing companies that are constantly look for some building, convention and training purposes for their employees.

"In this regard, Hillcrest Eagle Ridge partnered with the Philippine Society for Training & Development Foundation Inc. and Advantage Brand Counseling Inc., respectably, to assist organizations that offer leadership, skills development, strategic planning, team-building and other programs that can enhance organizational excellence," he said.

According to Bautista, the hotel is also promoting local tourism establishments to help other small businesses in the area.

"It also means that here we are not just a bed and breakfast hotel as we also provide a lot

Urban living reaches new heights at San Lorenzo Place

THE GODS OF GREEK MYTHOLOGY were known to have had an excellent vantage point when they looked down on Greece from their mountain home. Now, we too can boast of our own elite perspective from the Mount Olympus of Makati: San Lorenzo Place.

Located at the corner of Chino Roces Avenue and Kalye San Lorenzo where it is flanked on both sides by Magallanes and San Lorenzo villages—two subdivisions that have become synonymous with luxury and comfort. Across it is the prestigious Dasmariñas Village.

Towering over 2 villages

San Lorenzo Place rises some 30 stories into the sky, towering over these villages and providing a panoramic view of Rockwell and the Greenbelt complex and parks. At night, you can relax by your window and enjoy the bright lights of the cityscape from this pinnacle of sophisticated living.

In front of San Lorenzo Place is the MRT3 Magallanes Station, which is a one-stop train ride from the Ayala Station, bringing you right into the heart of Makati's CBD. This means that residents are only a few minutes away from first-dining restaurants and fastest fashions that can be found in the Greenbelt and Glorietta shopping districts.

4 towers

San Lorenzo Place, a project of leading real estate developer Megaworld Corp. Land Holdings Inc., is composed of four towers that host easy-to-live bedroom suites with modern amenities and designs. High-speed elevators bring you up the towers, with more than enough room for 24 square meters for a one-bedroom unit to fit up to for a two-bedroom unit.

Those who want more convenience and relaxation without leaving the comfort of this lovely home can avail themselves of the numerous recreational facilities at the ground and podium levels. There will be a three-level retail area filled with all your shopping needs—a grocery, dining establishments, cafés, clothing stores and much more.

Other amenities

Fitness buffs will be delighted and invigorated with the number of activities they can take part in, alone or with family and friends. On the sixth level podium deck you'll find basic's sequel jogging paths. Practice your

SAN Lorenzo Place gives residents families a luxurious lifestyle within a few hours of the Makati CBD.

Cypress Towers opens community to residents with turnover of first building

YOUNG FAMILIES AND EXECUTIVES from the middle-income segment have discovered a new address to locate to—an emerging "city of the future" that supports urban residents while maintaining a maximum environment that is lushly greenery. As a city on the verge of progress, Taguig has enjoyed flourishing development and tremendous expansion simultaneously transforming within the city's limits.

The company's history in Taguig was formed by DMCI 13 years ago way before the opening of the Bonifacio Global City," said Atty. Isidro U. Trinidad, DMCI Homes project director. "By then, DMCI started building some lands in Taguig which were just across C-5—a major thoroughfare linked to other road networks. The strategic location convinced us that Taguig had bright prospects in its property sector."

The migration of multinational corporations, hospitals, leisure complexes, schools, industrial facilities and residential developments to BGC in early 2000 revamped Taguig's image as a viable address, being centrally located yet retaining a suburban quality.

First project

The company's first project in Taguig was Cypress Towers, a three-tower, high-rise complex occupying some three (3) 3700 sq m of property, with a floor area of 30,000 sq m of luxury-oriented right near to C-5. It was to become the perfect counterpoint to BGC's luxury-type condo development with limited amenities.

Recently, the developer achieved another milestone when its first high-rise building in Cypress Towers was finally completed, ready for turnover to homeowners. "Richard Towers—named from the French word "heller" (beauty) until the Spanish word "mira" (sight) to signify a beautiful sight—is a marvel to behold with its unique modern architecture. More than esthetics though, the structural features ensures another purpose, which is to provide optimal sun and lighting and ventilation throughout the building.

The structure has other "perfect" attributes. It was finished four months ahead of schedule, giving homeowners an earlier move-in considerably sooner than another date. This only validates the strength of DMCI Homes, which relies on more than 30 years' experience in the construction industry.

Various advantages

Homer E. Cleil, DMCI Homes director for design and construction, cited the various advantages of an earlier move-in date. "For those waiting, they can immediately finish home and move in to their own home. Investors meanwhile can start offering rental

CYPRESS Towers opens community to residents with turnover of first building (Between Towers).

options to the market. For one part, we provide our capabilities to a developer that completes projects faster than promised."

Besides amenities, still are the pace of urban living for the high-rise units. Because of Cypress Towers' location, it is expected to house young families, upwardly mobile individuals and OFWs looking for a home within minimal travel distance. Access to such as the BGC and Makati Business District but could not afford the hefty prices of condos in those areas.

With Cypress Towers, they can avail in a convenient located within a 5-kilometer radius from the CBD, but offering a secured, affordable, accessible and elegant setting for condo dwellers.

Condo-dwellers can likewise enjoy the upgrade in lifestyle that they can now enjoy in Cypress Towers. Within the building, five-star features have also been installed to provide the with Bahaian's ambiance. There includes a sauna and steam room, lobby, relaxing indoor and al fresco dining areas, and a refreshing lap pool at the landscaped ground level.

Other developments

Other exciting developments continues around the complex. The second building, Celeste, is nearing its top-off date for its accomplished ahead of schedule. By next year, the building will be ready for turnover to homeowners. The third building, Milora, is also set to be launched in the third quarter of 2008, but construction has already commenced for this last phase.

Strategically located on C-5 in Barangay Ususan, Cypress Towers is another joint development of real estate developer DMCI Homes—the country's first. Triple A builder/developer that offers modern income-earning luxury options for the city money by providing homes with exceptional features and amenities, world-standard level of craftmanship.

Selection Never On Sale | Low Prices | 60 Colors to choose from plus More Stones

GRANITE, MARBLE, TRAVERTINE
SANDSTONE, LIMESTONES & SLATES
PR STONE SUPPLY INC.

Paulo Wealth:
Your Dream Home in a Heaven

Sooner or later, most super businessmen will have to tackle the dilemma of having to buy their first house. For some, this may be driven by a personal need to get away from the hustle and bustle of the metropolis, surrounded by lush and verdant greenery and situated within the proximity of beaches, historic sites and other sights; some prefer that provide a refreshing refuge for weary souls.

For a few others, the choice may be borne out of necessity such as a sudden promotion or simply to provide a more convenient opportunity for an ideal retirement place.

Given the staggering number of options available in the market, the choice ultimately boils down to three prime considerations, namely: affordability, proximity and convenience.

While the idea of securing their homes in some benefits, far-flung provinces may seem dreamy and romantic for some, they should never fail to address the more basic concerns such as accessibility, infrastructure, utilities and close proximity to commercial areas.

In the Philippines, very few locales strike as an ideal balance between environment and conveniences as well as the Calabarzon industrial region. With its bustling economy and positive culture spots, Batangas is fast gaining renown as a prime target for residential investments.

To date, the area boasts of a bevy of residential and sports communities, industrial zones – all strategically situated amongst lush, rolling terrain that provide breathtaking views of mountainsides, beach fronts and nature worshippers alike.

It was all these considerable attributes that inspired Sta. Lucia Realty and Development Inc., one of the country's largest and respected names in real estate development, to conceptualize the ideal residential haven for families seeking their very own home – particularly OFWs whose spare long years abroad to finally build the house

of their dreams.

Living up to its name as a verdant paradise, Punta Verde de Sta. Teresa sits right smack at the heart of a first class municipality only sixty kilometers from Manila. Looming over The Babylonia beaches of prime property are thematically-designed, landscaped villages that offer their own unique facilities such as pocket gardens, playgrounds, picnic grounds and nature trails that all contribute greatly to the area's healthy ambiance.

Convenience, safety and security are all assured within the confines of Punta Verde's modern conveniences in a relaxed countryside setting, with such amenities as a cable-ready network, paved sidewalks, a centralized water distribution system and electrical facilities.

To date, Sta. Lucia Homes provides houses for Punta Verde's comprehensive residential portfolio, with its wide selection of bungalows, two-storey homes and single-detached units.

Conveniently located along the Makati-Sta. Highway, Punta Verde is also very near commercial establishments, schools, churches and popular tourist-and-travel destinations.

With Pinoy Homes' affordable terms and attractive housing packages, satisfied homeowners need not struggle over payments, but can instead concentrate on other aspects of living.

"Sta. Lucia has made it easier for Filipinos to own their dream home," says a confident OFW, "as well as give an wise investment avenue for our children's future."

GREEN ARCHITRENDS
Arnaldo de Jesus

Omission

THE column logo of architect Arnaldo de Jesus was inadvertently omitted last week in his column titled "The Ubud Hanging Gardens in Bali."

We regret the omission.

PROPERTY

Dream of that dream house no longer. Buyers can move in to Brentville's ready-for-occupancy units and instantly get a taste of the luxurious and comfortable lifestyle that you have always wanted.

Brentville: A fully developed international community

No need to travel miles to experience the world over. It's all here at Brentville International, the flagship project of top property developer Filinvest Land Inc. It is located just 15 minutes away from Alabang and it is all set to cater to those who deeply value exclusivity and comfort.

The Mediterranean-themed international community located in the progressive town of Biñan, Laguna, is now fully developed with its world-class style of land development in place and all of its facilities and amenities functional.

So, dream of that dream house no longer. Buyers can move in to Brentville's ready-for-occupancy units and instantly get a taste of the luxurious and comfortable lifestyle that you have always wanted.

From its architecture to its diverse community, Brentville surely lives up to its reputation of providing world-class living. Its exclusive suburban setting exudes the young and cosmopolitan lifestyle that you won't experience elsewhere.

And that's not all. Buyers could also get their hands on topnotch privileges that are uniquely Brentville's.

World-class facilities

Each of the seven residential clusters has a terraced entrance, a grandfoyer, a playground, and a cabana. Inspired by Mediterranean architecture, homes are accented with cathedral-high ceilings, large windows and minimalist, elegant interiors.

On weekends, homeowners can choose to escape the heavy Metro traffic and congestion and instead have a barbecue party right in the generous grounds of Brentville. Residents could also beat the heat during the summer at the main clubhouse's infinity pool or spend those idyllic sunsets on the tennis and basketball courts.

Aside from the tree-lined and landscaped sidewalks, is sporting trails to give residents more relaxing and less distracting with wires and cables laid underground.

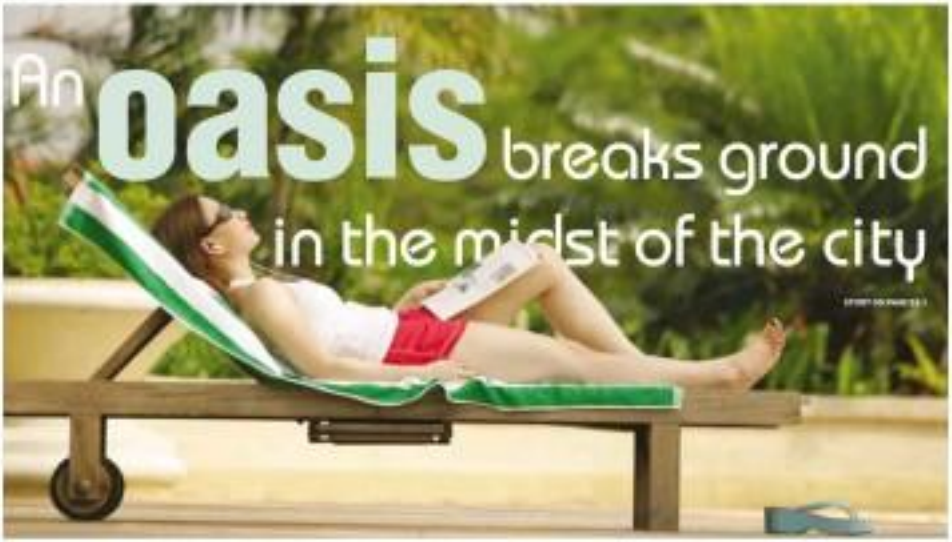
Unique privileges

Buying a home at Brentville also means an automatic ticket to a luxurious and leisurely lifestyle that you simply can't resist.

Brentville II residents are treated to a membership share in the exclusive Palms Country Club in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang for five years and get exclusive access to a wide range of services and facilities that the premiere private club offers. Buyers of a single detached unit are also appointed as members

BRENTVILLE B2C

An oasis breaks ground in the midst of the city



Brentville: A fully developed international community

area for our membership share.

Another distinct privilege is the Brentwood Privilege Program (BPP). Through this, residents gain access to the world-class facilities in the Brent International School located just outside the community. Residents can use the campus' Olympic-sized pool, its all-weather track and field, and its state-of-the-art electronic library among many others. With a diverse crop of students coming from more than 40 countries, residents are treated to a unique World Cup experience once kids take on the football field.

24-hour security

Brentville guarantees its residents a worry-free and a peaceful night's sleep. With two security teams roving around the neighborhood 24/7, homeowners are assured of a quiet and safe environment.

The "blue" guards of Brentville and the "white" guards of the Brent School check all vehicles coming in and out of the village. All entrances are secured as there are separate guardhouses at the main gate and your community.

International neighborhood

What better way to complete the "world-class" feel than the community itself?

Brentville is home to different nationalities, making it a community of cultural diversity. Residents can build friendships with people from around the world, and who knows, maybe your child can learn how to say "hello" in six different languages in no time.

Brentville is a prime community under the Filinvest Premiere brand. One of the country's leading property developers, Filinvest Land Inc. offers a wide array of themed communities, conveniently situated in various parts of the country to give you unlimited options and a choice of living experiences.

If you want to experience Brentville's world-class living and gain access to these first-rate privileges, you may inquire at 807-5511 or 816-3746 or visit our website www.brentville.com.

Four out of 10 urban professionals are not doing their jobs very well, and it is not because they are lazy, nor is it because they do not like their jobs. It is just that they are suffering from too much stress.

In a global survey by Regus Hizefabric of 30,000 people between the ages of 13 and 65 in 36 countries, it was found out that 42 percent of urban professionals feel "super-stressed," one reason being the hustle and bustle of city living.

This is why Filinvest, being one of the leading real estate developers in the Philippines, conceptualized a residential community that will give Filipinos urbanites a respite from the downside of living in the metropolis.

"We want to offer professionals and start-up families residing in the metro a living space that will not only serve as their home, but also as their haven situated right here in the middle of the city," says Felini Concepcion, FILINVEST Group Head of One Oasis-Ortigas. True to Filinvest's aim to transform living spaces to fit the needs of the urban Filipino lifestyle, they have put in place this residential garden community that is One Oasis.

One Oasis is a resort-inspired development with amenities that provide **family cohesion** a powerful retreat from the daily grind. Located within the premises of the Ortigas Business District, it is composed of 11 five-story residential buildings. One Oasis also a refreshing living space, which is a sustainable breakaway from the concrete structures of the city. It allots 45 percent of its land area to greenery—out of the 4.5 hectares it occupies, two hectares will be dedicated to gardens and open spaces.

Moreover, its residences will not only be a refuge but will also enjoy resort and recreational amenities including a clubhouse, swimming pools, a wellness room, entertainment room, billiard hall, jogging/walking path, basketball court, open fenced-in dog playground, and a tot pool.

To alleviate the stress brought about by city commute, One Oasis is strategically located along Ortigas Avenue, and the residents have easy access to public transportation. With Greenhills practically by your doorstep, as well as Eastwood (The New Global City) shopping center, SM Megamall, Robinsons Galleria, Shangri-La Plaza, The Podium, Tiendesitas, and educational institutions (La Salle Greenhills, Poveda, St Paul Pasig), its location is very convenient.

One Oasis also values safety and security, and a dedicated property management team ensures the upkeep of the master-planned community. A buffer fence surrounding the whole community and a round-the-clock security system provide safety within the premises and the surroundings of the community.

With Filinvest, an icon in the middle of the metropolitan is a refuge to many, because soon, One Oasis will be here for the Filipino urbanite. Construction of the first two buildings started last February with Building A currently 87 percent completed and Building B almost 90 percent complete. Both are scheduled for completion in early 2010 with the others not far behind.

For more inspiration on how you can break away from the hustle and bustle of the city by having a refuge you can call your own, log on to fnlp://www.filinvest.com.ph or call 856-7788.

'We want to offer professionals and start-up families residing in the metro a living space that will not only serve as their home, but also as their haven situated right here in the middle of the city'

One Oasis
ORTIGAS
My patch of green in the city.

TOPPING OFF OF BUILDING B
TODAY
Come and enjoy discounts as high as P125,000!*

Five reasons to come home to One Oasis:

Come home to a haven
Amidst the rush of today's world, One Oasis is a respite with more than two hectares of gardens and open spaces. Starting with the two-storey buildings, One Oasis will be introducing a variety of other living spaces to fit every urban Filipino lifestyle.

Come home to an accessible getaway
Conveniently situated in Ortigas, One Oasis is only minutes away from schools, hospitals and shopping centers. You can rest without being too from wherever you need to be.

Come home to resort-inspired amenities
One Oasis' resort-inspired amenities is part of an entertainment room, a billiard hall, a basketball court, a playground and swimming pools.

Come home to a secure environment
With round-the-clock security and a protective fence enclosing the entire community, One Oasis ensures your safety and peace of mind.

Come home to where your hard work is valued
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VICINITY MAP

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856-7788 FILINVEST LEGACY

Living in a greener pasture

In the urban setting, there are more stores named after trees than the actual living things. Revolutionary real estate developers however, are using the principles of new urbanism to create a harmonious merger between the environments and modern conveniences. One of them is Filinvest Premiere, crowning the improvements of nature to family and community relations, health, as well as relaxation. Filinvest Premiere then Timberland Heights, a 617-hectare mountain suburb township, is a perfect example.

"Homeowners consider thriving with nature an option, but it is actually fast becoming a necessity given its impact on health and well-being," says Alberi Morales, Project Group Head of Timberland Heights.

Timberland Heights' vision to create a modern township without detaching the natural greenways of the San Mateo mountains enhances family bonding and community living. Just by being exposed to the development's lush greenery, rolling terrains, and panoramic views of Laguna de Bay and Sierra Madre Mountain Range can affect the quality of life by improving everyday moods and emotional health of the residents. Research performed by social scientists have found substantial evidence that people who view nature constantly experience fewer feelings of fear, anger and aggression and are kind to others' needs among families and neighbors.

Just 15 minutes away from Quezon City, road working parents as well as exhausted students can come home and find solace in Timberland Heights as they take advantage of the township's different exclusive amenities. They can just let Clark greet them as they stroll to their gardens or mini-farms, take a relaxing dip in the infinity pool, go out with friends and hang out in the nearby restaurant or music bar, or invite friends to sit by the cool grass and view the magnificent cityscape. At the end of the day activities that involve contact with friends or family will help them become physically and emotionally healthy.

"Bonding with family involves support and communication that's why it is important that we provide them a place where they could preserve those priceless moments", continues Morales. Family activities in rich green environment sets an ideally ground to build positive values that are necessary for Filipino family".

And needless to say living in a place where the environment is truer is beneficial to health. Trees, for example, can significantly alter the environment by lowering air temperature. Upon entering Timberland Heights, you will notice that the air is cooler. Trees and vegetation present in the development also improve the quality of air by absorbing carbon dioxide, particulates and other pollutants from the air, and increasing the level of available oxygen. This minimizes the chances of acquiring respiratory illnesses caused by polluted air.

These efforts did not hinder Timberland Heights to put up modern facilities that are also necessary to provide a complete living experience to its residents. An example of this is the Timberland Sports and Nature Club—a lifestyle destination that houses first-rate amenities for leisure, sports and recreation. Featuring a fully equipped fitness gym, top-of-the-line spa, indoor rock climbing wall, a multi-purpose court for badminton, basketball and tennis, and a swimming pool and outdoor provisions for trekking, hiking and camping, Timberland Heights and Nature Club demonstrates the seamless synergy between modernization and environmental preservation.

"Green is the color of life. Protecting and preserving the environment have always been important to our development and we will continue to take a proactive stance on this," explains Morales. And with its ideal mix of residential spaces, farm estates, and leisure and recreational activities, Timberland Heights is a thriving green sanctuary where family life is enhanced.

Timberland Heights is a mountain suburb township by Filinvest Premiere boasting of modern conveniences amid nature's splendor. For more information, please call 856-7788 and 415-9468 or visit www.timberlandheights.com. For inquiries about membership at Timberland Sports and Nature Club, please call 376-9955 or fax us at 376-9978 or visit www.timberlandclub.com.

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Lucky Me!
Famealy Day
2 araw na lang!
Be home for dinner on September 22, 2008
Pagkain, oras, lugar hindi mahalaga, basta pamilya'y buo at magkasama.

The craziest things Dingdong and Piolo did for a girl

Take five with the country's hottest men

By Bianca Consunji
Photos by Ryan Fernandez

PIOLO PASCUAL AND Dingdong Dantes are damn good-looking, and they know it.

At the media launch of Nivea Polish White Cream Duo recently, they entered the room at Greenbelt Plaza with a self-assured, confident...but far from cocky—air.

Dressed in dapper suits, hair neatly in place, they looked like your typical perfect men, perfect boyfriend material. But one peek under the cuffs of their pants revealed that these guys were not your typical perfect men.

Instead of the usual socks, they sported...

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A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

Where to Stop Where to Go

A Bellevue towering experience

THE BELLEVUE HOTEL, THE PRIMIER business hotel south of the Metro, recognizes the demand for luxury and business accommodations in the bustling shidong area.

Time, visionaries Grand Sherlaroth Johnny Chan, general manager Patrick Chan and marketing and communications director Wynn Chan created another masterpiece with the new location wing, Bellevue New Tower, built as an expansion than offers an additional 200 rooms, featuring the environment-friendly concept of a Go Green lifestyle, the new tower will use eco-friendly energy efficient air-conditioning, heating and lighting systems.

The new Tower wing's architecture is done by architects Emilino and Gavino Tan with its interiors by architect Aileo de Guzman, the same team behind the original Bellevue Hotel.

Rising in 2009, the Bellevue New Tower is an ex-tenantly the South with its elegant structure and homely atmosphere. With a "green" room or "green-friendly" design, the new Tower wing will have bigger rooms with the best bed and internationally made furniture pieces and fixtures, and conveniences like fast IT network, high-tech TV and entertainment systems.

The Bellevue New Tower provides a 200-sqm grand lobby, a 200-seat restaurant offering Chinese cuisine, a leisure bar on the top floor with a 3-story mini cellar, a world-class spa, and a 25x7 meter poolside deck.

The Bellevue Hotel is located at South Bridgeway, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

Café Jeepney offers new a la carte and buffet menus

CAFÉ JEEPNEY IS ADDING NEW selections to its a la carte and buffet menus. Guests will surely delight in the choice of local and international dishes that Executive Chef Patrick Fuentes has created. Some of the new additions to the a la carte menu are Tom Yum Goong (a classic Thai soup consisting of prawns in clear broth), Shanlu Lumpia (Filipino spring rolls with Chinese flavor), Shanlu Lumpia (Filipino spring rolls with Chinese flavor), Hainanese Chicken Rice, Soy Bean Cocktail Shredded Green Cabbage filling served hot and crispy with Chili Vinegar and Dry Shrimp crackers), Light Tuscan Salad (Fresh Arugula Leaves tossed with Extra Virgin Olive Oil-Lemon Dressing, Dried Figs, Dried Mangoes and Roasted Pecans), Tenderloin Beef Steak Tagalog (Grilled US Beef Parisian with mild onion gravy, Stir Fry Vegetable and Steamed Rice), Lapu-Lapu "Pepper" (Steamed fish fillet served in soy, Hainan Mushroom and Bell Pepper Vegetable Sauce), and Curry Thai Paneer (Philippine Style Paneer Braised in Spicy Green Coconut Milk and Curry Sauce). A variety of sweet temptations is also available at the dessert buffet. Choose from local desserts and pastries such as Crepe Samurai, Brazo Chocolate Cake, Blueberry Cheesecake and more.

Café Jeepney offers a la carte and buffet for breakfast from 6 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. daily, lunch from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and dinner from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Monday to Saturday. There is also a special Sunday Brunch Buffet from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. For reservations, call 793.7000.

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Enjoy a relaxing retreat in the heart of the city at Somerset Serviced Residences presents At Home at Somerset. With three strategically located properties in bustling Makati City—Somerset Millennium, Somerset Olympia and Somerset Salcedo Makati presents special discounts and privileges in this exclusive offer. At rates starting from P4,120++, residents may enjoy complimentary welcome amenities, continental plus breakfast, use of recreational facilities including swimming pool and fitness center, local calls, daily local newspaper and parking. Other additional discounts include: 20 percent discount on laundry services and use of the business center. Enjoy a balanced and enriched stay at Somerset—because life is about living. For reservations, call central reservations at 751-8888. Quote At Home at Somerset when you make your reservation to avail of the special rates and privileges. At Home at Somerset is valid until Jan. 31.

SUCCESSFUL PHITEX 2008

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano (left) welcomes the Solitel Philippine Pitch general manager Bernd Schneider upon arrival at the welcome dinner for the participants in the eighty successful Philippine Travel Exchange (Phitex) 2008, held at the SMX Convention Center recently. Phitex 2008 drew the participation of 187 foreign wholesale buyers and 156 local sellers of tourism packages. Tu Durano's talk is Phitex 2008 project manager Tess Macalos of the Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp., the marketing arm of the Department of Tourism.

Financial Times Directory

The craziest things Dingdong and Piolo did for a girl

Pangagat

DAMPER SPEAK. "If the sky was the limit, the sky wouldn't be enough if Cyber Sex is the movie."

PIOLO SORPY. "I think it's a nice thing to be able to age with confidence."

stepped onstage, dance took over. Star chart: excited chitchat, conversation stalled to the stage, and people craned their necks just to get a glimpse of the idols.

If the hordes of drooling women (and some men) are any indication of their popularity, it's evident: Piolo and Dingdong are the hottest matinee idols—and from rival TV networks, at that. So it came as surprise that both guys are both in the Pinkish White Dream Date concert hosted by PinoyFlix.

"Piolo and Ding doing an ideal boyfriend and girlfriend number, that was kind of romance for female viewers," says Anjo Yuvienco, PinoyFlix brand manager. "We're making it possible for women to realize romance in a way that's larger than life."

While it's easy enough to get a glimpse of Piolo and Dingdong every day on TV, the real thing is pretty different from the reel.

There's more to them than just talent and chiseled looks.

What are Piolo and Dingdong looking for in their love interests and dream candidates for the rest.

What's the craziest thing you've done for a girl?

Piolo: I wouldn't call it crazies, but maybe the most romantic—I went on a European tour with her. We went around different cities in Europe.

Dingdong: Ako, I'm more nakakatawa na—I'm using nakakahiya na UP—yung sobrang corny na mga bagay. Yung pagpapakanta, nagbibida ako sa classroom ko. Dapat may pagpapapansin ka rin, sa halong pa rin palang 100 pesos.

If budget-wise, the sky was the limit, what would you do on a date?

Piolo: I'd bring her to outer space. It's a romantic safest in MOA's.

Dingdong: If the sky was the limit, the sky wouldn't be enough. I'd take her to the moon! We won't be contaminated by germ by MOA dance around, eat in space! Apan just a handipad ang mga bituin!

Piolo: Sabay-sunset tayo?

Dingdong: Wala, puro ito eh.

You're always in the spotlight. If you could be invisible for a day what would you do?

Piolo: I'd spy a star in the palace to check out the activities of the President, to know and see things one by regular basis. Or maybe piano-type para sa economy natin.

Dingdong: Instead of being invisible, I'd like to be a mouse clerk for a day. I want to know how many trips they can do back and forth in one day! I wanna know many times can you go in one room!

Are you afraid of aging? What's your skin care routine?

Piolo: I'm actually looking forward to it. I think it's a nice thing to be able to age with wisdom. I want to grow old enough to be able to use fine lines and not be extremely conscious with what I look like, to be able to spend time with the kids. In his skin care, I use Pond's cold cream to remove the makeup. I have to wear on the set, then I just wash with mineral water.

Dingdong: As it did and here, I abandon—avoided na 'ko—ang edad. I showed, older than my age and tried to look more mature. But as I turned 26, I realized I had to take a step back and enjoy myself at this age—like's her close to be in infancy to age. If I could, I'd be stuck at 26 for the remainder! For skin care, I also use Pond's cold cream and soap and water, but sometimes, I forget and just fall into bed as solving papol.

Would you date someone who had dated Piolo/Dingdong?

Piolo: I wish I could say I wouldn't, but it happened to me before. Love just happens—you can't choose the circumstances, so you must be able to base the courage to make sure things are okay with everyone. I had to go up to the guy and ask for his permission, to make sure that things were okay with him.

Dingdong: Well for one thing, you have to be over that person that you used to date, and make sure that there are no issues in case left to resolve. You know—except that it was a good thing while it lasted, then goodbye. Of course, being unsure na—mayroon ba ng iba?

If you could plan each other's dates with someone special, what would you make him do?

Piolo: I'd want to make Ding-ding do something crazy, like propose to Kristine during the inauguration of his clinic. [Wow! Sobrahan!]

Dingdong: I would make them wear period costumes, take two horses, and stroll along the fields of Batanes or something, like in the set of his current movie. His money, not food—don't have to find whatever's free.

Finally, if you could give advice to your younger selves, what would it be?

Piolo: Extreme nerves maaga, magpapayat naman kami kung gusto!

Dingdong: Ayaw ko nang, respeto, Pancing! "Respeto."

Do you still see yourself in showbiz after five years?

Piolo: I'd like to still be around, but I want to be a minimum in well—and I want to stay here in the Philippines. I'm constantly in touch with my Pinoy friends! Yearly Commodore to see what I can do.

Dingdong: Definitely, I'd still be in show biz. I wouldn't want to leave it. But I'd like to branch out a bit—I want to direct, make good films, help restore Philippine cinema.

Finally, figure 20 ka pa rin after five years.

Dingdong: Joke ang yan, pare.

Any message to the girls who turned you down when you weren't hot and famous yet?

Piolo: Ayaw ko sayo, eh! [Laughs.]

Dingdong: Wow, Uh.... "Let me try again?"

Tours, Leisure & Chow

It's more than just a children's birthday party at Tony Roma's

TONY ROMA'S, the casual dine-in ran family restaurant that is celebrating its Baby Back Ribs, offers more than just great ribs and other flame-grilled specialties. It's also an ideal place to host your child's birthday party, where you can be assured of a fun-filled birthday with good food and exciting activities. With a minimum spending of P5,000, the Children's Party Package includes: invitations cards, party smeltine for kids, parties for kids, kid's meals and adult a la carte menu as long as the amount is almost P5,500 and up[illegible] buffet such as manoris, face painting, wardrobe balloon, crowns, magic show and balloon twisting at reasonable prices. Simply allow by 7 days advance notice to their[illegible] birthday party. Party bookings are from Monday to Saturday with the following available time slots: 10 a.m. to 11 a.m., 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. For additional information, call 757-9258 (Greenhills) or 771-1365 (Alabang).

Rice and Shine at Sushi-Ya

RISE & SHINE at healthy yet affordable Sushi-Ya's morning pages at Sushi-Ya's new home in SM Mega Mall located at the Lower Ground floor of Building B. The health-conscious must-try Kaisendon, correctly-vegetable fritters with tempura sauce worth P130; or Tonkatsu don, slices of chicken breast fillet at P168. The beef lovers should see Gyudon and Sukiyakidon, delicious and Pork Bbq at P168 and P175 respectively. The sushi and sushi lovers should not miss Oroshi-don, sushi's slices of tuna, salmon, tamago, ikura and ocean roe wrapped in rice at P180. A refreshingly healthy option? Call 924-9888 for free delivery with minimum charge.

Mag Kita-Kita tayo sa Kalye!

DELICIOUS birthdays, anniversaries or "mantheanies" at Kalye Juan. Invite friends and loved ones to indulge in the house specialties. Sing to Kalye—grilled pork with fresh onions, chicken liver and fresh peppers, and sizzling plate. Watch the sushi Bangus Bare-Bare, the popular Filipino dish with healthy, no-spice belly strips. An breakfast meals available all day. Loved by all the family—grilled corn served with garlic fried rice and fried eggs. Perfect matched with Barako coffee and tsa for those who doesn't. Kalye Juan is located at 2/F Building, Forbes Market corner Scout Rallos (479-2500) and at North Parking, 1M Mall of Asia (558-0012).

Paella perfect at Market Cafe

TREAT yourself to delicious paella dishes cooked to perfection. Originally from Valencia, Spain, where paella is traditionally eaten on Sundays, you can now enjoy this delicacy day at Market Cafe. Recommended by the cafe patrons of paella recipes as the Western Mexican at Market Cafe is transformed into the ultimate paella station. Take time to relish authentic and freshly cooked seafood Paella, Meat, Negra, Paella Valencia and Vegetarian Paella. Save the flavor of saffron at Conrose at Market Cafe. Located at Ayala Hotel and Casino/Manila. For inquiries and reservations, call 830-1234.

The beauty of Style Trend

STYLE TREND opened the doors to its Quezon City location in 2006, offering a whole line of salon and spa services. The Style Trend experience is more enhanced going to your ordinary salon or spa. Soon as guests step in the salon, you will be greeted with warm smiles and air-scented a VIP treatment. Every guest is carefully assessed. Professional stylists and attendants explore the services, treatment or style that you would need and makes sure this to your liking. Style Trend incorporated lifestyle, personality, and physical characteristics to create a look that balances and complements a guest's physical attributes and lifestyle. The cozy ambiance in Style Trend gives you that relaxed, comfortable feeling. Details count a lot— the choice of hydrosols used for the hair, skin sensitivity, latest equipment, organized and professional receptionist and waiters. As for the spa, Style Trend is dedicated to providing customers with touch more than the usual day spa services. Treatments blend with traditional techniques and state-of-the-art spa therapies to pamper the body and soothe the spirit. Whether you book an hour or a day to spend, Style Trend gives you that ultimate spa experience. For inquiries, appointment and reservation for special occasion, you or call Style Trend at 908 Timog Avenue, Quezon City (411-2189).

Microtel Mactan now open

EVEN BEFORE the newest and the biggest Microtel inn & Suites in Mactan Island, Cebu/ With 163 rooms, it is the biggest in the affordable mid-chain and stunningly so. The first in the country to feature Microtel's new award-winning suite design. Facing the dazzling waves and white-sand beach, experience a truly relaxing and exclusive stay with the hotel's choice rustic-appointed "healthy for the back beds" and guest facilities that include an infinity pool, coffee shop and beach bar. Microtel is an international chain of limited service hotels with 300+ properties open and under construction worldwide. What else to look up to Microtel in Davao, Batangas, Boracay, Cebu, Mactan, Cavite, Baguio, Tacloban and soon to open in Palawan and SM Mall of Asia. All Microtel of the Philippines are managed by Microtel Development Corp., the hospitality arm of the Pimentel Group. For inquiries, call 811-1171 or 0917-8237171.

MENDIOLA

The Richmonde Hotel appoints new executive sous chef

THE RICHMONDE Hotel announces the appointment of Greg B. Mendiola as its new executive sous chef. Chef Greg brings with him over more than 15 years of experience in world-class kitchens of hotels and luxury cruise liners. His culinary career started in 1990 as sauce cook of the fine dining restaurant of a deluxe hotel in Makati, where he learned the ropes of kitchen set-up as part of the pre-opening team. In few years' time, he joined the cruise method to open him a place in the renowned M/S Bloemfontein, the world-class of Royal Caribbean International. He was also part of the pre-opening team to five years' time, he joined the cruise method to open him a place in the renowned M/S Bloemfontein, the world-class of Royal Caribbean International. He was also part of the pre-opening team,

SUPER EXCLUSIVE!

Frisky business

An exclusive behind-the-scenes look at what goes on behind Adult Swim's 'Frisky Dingo'

WHEN AL GORE LOST the 2000 US presidential election, he spent a bunch. When billfish, one of the stars of Adult Swim's 'Frisky Dingo,' loses his bid for the White House, no account of article 8 of the US Constitution requiring that a candidate be a naturalborn citizen and not, say, a cloven-hooded supervillain, the natural reaction is to avenge his dead penguin by destroying the world.

You know, the same thing Gore would've done if he hadn't come up with that ghost-scanning machine.

FACEBOOK friends

Welcome to the world of "Frisky Dingo," where the political landscape is only slightly more absurd than that of the real world. The show, currently in its second season on the Cartoon Network, introduces viewers to renegade billionaire superhero Xander Crews and his nemesis, the above-mentioned billfish.

The show is smart, highly entertaining, and—like most of the Adult Swim canon—sometimes creepy.

Animating Frisky

Creating the bizarre world is an ambitious task, especially considering that almost all the work done on "Frisky Dingo" is done literally in-house.

The staff of 70/30 Productions—the studio behind "Frisky Dingo" and early Adult Swim favorite "Sealab 2021"—consists of eight guys in hoodies who hail from 20s and early-30s, inhabiting a nondescript house in a quiet East Atlanta neighborhood. It takes this raging bunch-of-not-four to seven weeks to finish a single episode.

Here is a peek behind the curtain and into the creative process, from the initial script to sound mixing—an exclusive granted by the production team to Super.

Step 1

Series co-creator Adam Reed pens a script. The old industry adage requires one page per minute of show, but "Frisky Dingo's" rapid-fire scripts are weightier than most; the show is only about 11 minutes an episode, but scripts usually run between 12 and 16 pages.

It's sort of like if "CSI" had more explosions and an evil supervillain. And a penguin. And a ball-mania ball reminiscent. And instead of a team of investigators, it had an army of mech-suit-wearing soldiers called Xanders. Actually, the "CSI" reference might be a little harsh.

Step 2

A "table" reading, where everyone in 70/30's employ—from art director to interns—weighs in on the new script. Matt Thompson, the show's other co-creator, moderates.

Step 3

Once a script is finalized, voice actors arrive at the 70/30 house to record their parts in a closet-size sound booth, although voice acting on the show is a healthy mix of mostly-Atlanta area actors and 70/30 employees, expert Mike Miko and pundit Ellis Hennican voice, respectively, a rapper and a pundit.

But they're not alone in their commitment to method acting. Mr. Ford, an elderly black man who lives near the 70/30 house, returns a character DOG IS ACTUALLY AN ELDERLY BLACK MAN NAMED MR. FORD. How there's a method understanding Mr. Rogers would balk at.

Step 4

Lead animator Mark Williams uses a computer program called Anim 8Brain to move characters from hinged joints like their shoulders, elbows, and knees, as well as head, neck, waist, and feet. They're 360-ago proportioners using a digital marionette.

Like several other Adult Swim shows, "Frisky Dingo" uses a method called "limited animation," which means not every element in a scene moves. Although the aesthetic is obviously different from fully animated standbys like "Futurama," it's quicker and cheaper to produce.

Plus, Williams says, "You'd be surprised by how little your brain registers as not-in-motion."

Step 5

Once an episode is sound-mixed, it goes to the Cartoon Network's studios, where it will soar until it airs. This is where you come in, gentle reader. You watch. You laugh. You buy affordably priced merchandise.

Adult Swim 101

As the name suggests, Adult Swim is a late-night segment of recently aired and currently reruns on the Cartoon Network that aims for a more mature—or at least older—audience. The shows' sensibilities are absurd, but they're occasionally brilliant and always interesting. Here are a few that comprise the ideological backbone of this wonderfully bizarre programming block.

Robot Chicken

Co-creator Seth Green and his Hollywood pals voice these extremely stoned-funny, claymation pop-culture spoofs.

Aqua Teen Hunger Force

A meatball, a box of fries and a milkshake, and a fuzzy guy named Carl have adventures. Seriously. That's it.

Venture Bros.

This super-smart spoof of Jonny Quest and Hardy Boys cartoons owes a massive tribute to the action-cartoons of the '80s.

Squidbillies

When you've got a family of hillbilly squid with a sidekick named by a computer-and-clock obsessed psychopath, you've earned the right to violence. It's a recipe for awesome, complete with dozens of dysfunctional subplots.

super LIFESTYLE
style . urban living . pop culture . entertainment . recreation

Write of passage

Grand Palanca Award winner Miguel Syjuco sheds light on his multi-layered novel, 'Ilustrado'

STARRING: artist (above) as the lover of victim

ONE NIGHT EVERY YEAR, the country's finest wordsmiths tear themselves away from their keypads and blogs, dip into their funniest evening wear, and head off to a five-star venue to toast the best creators and creations of original Filipino literature. The Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature, or The Palancas, is one reunion of the Palanxers.

This is the tuxbrood ball, the exclusive club of scholarly giants exchanging ideas and ink-stained handshakes. Amid the scribblers in this year's awards, many of whom only gain notable traction behind their bulky manuscripts, was a newcomer novice, a 34-year-old Ateneo-trained lawyer-turned-writer named Miguel Syjuco, anchored with the creative energy of the night.

Most Miguel writers, new members of the inner sanctum. He is this year's Grand Palancas winner for his first novel, "Ilustrado."

Though Syjuco has lived almost his the past seven years, many remember him fondly as "Chuck," a mainstay of the poetry and prose-filled nights of Xanadu on, altgc and Malate bars in the mid-'90s.

After graduating from Ateneo, he founded with three friends localbias.com, in three days the seminal online magazine before the dotcom crash and fell. In 2001 he left Manila to take his Masters in Creative Writing on Columbia University, and has since lived in New York, Adelaide and Montreal.

"Ilustrado" was a mainstream witness, and was later praised by Palanca judge Tony Hidalgo as "a very important work." It is a classic three-year labor of love, unrequited until now.

The novel is about a great Filipino author, Crispin Salvador, found out of the Hudson River in New York in 2001. Prolific, celebrated, and despised, Crispin was the Filipino shining star in the West between the '70s and '90s before falling into obscurity.

He was last speaking on a book that was to catapult him back to fame, about the corrupt roots of many powerful Filipino families. The strange circumstances of Crispin's death lead a young student of his, named Miguel, to investigate whether or not it was indeed a suicide as had been reported by the press and police.

Miguel suspects that Crispin's death is linked to his final novel, which had mysteriously disappeared.

WHITE 11

Write of passage

Miguel returns to the Philippines to uncover more things about his country, but most importantly, he also discovers a lot about himself as a young writer who's left the country.

With both poise, a deluge of quotable lines, hilarious literary feuds, and intellectual meditations on the writing craft and Filipino diaspora, what is truly notable about "Ibon sa Isla" is the depiction of the dead author Grisgon through a meticulous reconstruction of his life's work, interviews and personal letters. It is so convincing that it's hard to believe Velasco made it all up, including a Wikipedia entry for the curious (or gullible).

"Ibon sa Isla" is also long listed for the Man Asian Literary Prize. The day after the Palanca, Jojo(e) shared some tricks and secrets about his novel.

You worked on "Ibon sa Isla" for three years. Did you have the Palanca in mind?

I'm working on it for my Ph.D. in Creative Writing. Those past three years, nobody has read it, really, except for my girlfriend, Edith, and a couple of other friends. So I was really nervous during if I was doing something of merit.

I thought, maybe I should be writing "The Kite Runner" of the Philippines! In this whole Palanca win has somewhat validated it, that it does kinda make sense; the structure does have integrity. That's why I was very happy to come home to receive the award. It's a great honor, but it's also a great affirmation that three years haven't been wasted.

Can you talk about that structure, a departure from the usual straight narrative?

I've resisted the whole life's work of the character Crispin Salvador—his essays, interviews, memoir, poetry, etc. I've been able to make this kind of grand literary fragments, or others viewed together, you notice these patterns coming together. Because of to non-linear structure, it encompasses the late 1800s during the time of the Revolution, the Philippine Assembly under the US, the Hak Rebellion, the Marcos Regime, post-Marcos, until Crispin's death in 2001. So it's got the whole process of leaving and returning to the Philippines, that the title "Bastards."

How did it enhance the narrative, which is, for my lack of a prettier term, chronological?

Interestingly enough, the patterns and the structure I've tried to put together have allowed me a great breadth. I first wrote it as straight narrative, and it came out to 100,000 words.

Oh my God.

But it was 400 pages, it was massive! Then I thought, okay, this is my first book, no one's gonna publish this, it's flaw, it's heavy. It's exploring things like nihilism, Christianity, communism—which has its merits, but we tend to overlook because it was such a failure—and what must be done to the Philippines.

At a 400-page manuscript it didn't work. So I cut it all up, opened 10 different Word documents, and I put everything in each document. And top-notch form.

It's funny because I watched this old Will Ispe about the western in Hindustan and I thought, wow what a stupid metaphor but maybe I should weave it in there's what I did. I wove them and I got it down to 80,000 words. I let the pages speak for themselves.

And it worked...

I believe that to this day and age, the truth is fragmented. You get it from newspapers, TV blogs, friends, school, whatever. I've got a name in "Bastards" where the protagonist is flipping through channels. I use that as a device to sweep over what's happening in the Philippines. Our socio-political reality!

I've got Boy Benito Johns, riddles, newspaper excerpts, overheard conversations on a PAL flight to Bacolod... it's all these different things happening at the periphery that make a whole.

One big criticism of the novel as a whole is that some people don't get it at all, they say there's nothing happening, it doesn't make sense, or "it's so regular!" But that is the point, when you take it as a whole, it all comes together.

A line from your book, 'Literature is the ambiguous line between fact and fiction,' seems to be a wink at the reader because you've explored that theme in your novel, where you play around deliberately with fact and fiction.

I'm trying to blur the difference between fact and fiction. The protagonist is named Miguel. A lot of the stories and figures might be connected as real. But this is a fictional Philippines. Yet there are many things that are true. Not necessarily factual, but true nonetheless.

I hate the fact that we think, 'okay I'm reading fiction, now I'm going to be entertained,' or 'okay I'm reading nonfiction I'm gonna derive life lessons from this so I should take this seriously.' I think that's all labor! So I'm trying to shake that up.

Did anyone believe any of your fictional characters was real?

I pitched my story to an agent in New York and they passed it on to three other agents and they had trouble with it. They came back to me and said, "it has merit that no one's good, but why are there so many excerpts from Ibon Cangin-Salvador entries?"

They thought Crispin was real! So I thought, yes, galing! There're gonna be so happy that I fooled them! Because what writer doesn't want to build a character that is so real that everybody thinks it's?

So did they pick it up?

No, they didn't pick it up! They passed on my novel. But still, I got this wonderful feeling that even, I created a character that people thought was real.

You take Into National Artist, NVM Gonzalez, who was one of your Creative Writing teachers, as great influence. Were you able to tear away from his style, or is there a lot of his influence in it?

There is, well, I have to see the word "parody," but I do want to do it in serious caveat. NVM was a valuable resource because a lot to me, he was the first person who believed in my work enough to get it published. But I found myself writing like him too much.

Like Bienvenido Santos, Carlos Bulosan...I love their work. But I can't write like them, because I need to write like myself. And, therefore, I'm evolving, I'm jumping off from that.

Dennis Hopelewi was also one of my mentors at Columbia University. He told me to be an international writer who happens to be Filipino. I've used to do that. But I've also used to jump off from what that's done.

Like what another great Filipino writer, Dean Alfar, once said, you need to build, and then kill your literary fathers.

Yeah, exactly! You need to learn the field, to make it more lovely. It took me a while to come to terms with that. But it helps that I'm abroad. I'm working in isolation. It's very difficult though because I don't have the affirmation, I don't have a support group.

How has living abroad helped your writing?

One thing I've learned while away is the value of rewriting. Here, I'd write a story and try to get it published. Then, by invite it for spelling. I've learned to also take from other cultures. I think as Filipinos, we share the background with Latin Americans, and also the thinking that we can write magical realistically. I don't agree. We need to move forward from that.

Just like social realism—it doesn't all have to be all left-wing. Marxist writing like from Pineda or Cuba. We are international, we're Filipinos, we're Spanish, we're American, we are all of those things at the same time! And if we write all of those at the same time, we'll write authentically Filipino.

Would you say you've more poetic side when you are away?

I think so! Those past seven years, I've had to seek out the Philippines in my memory and in my heart. I've had to rush my own Filipino food. I'd visit my brother in San Francisco and we'd make sigbil soup or Indy Oriz, as our part of our diaspora, and feel like, 'ahhh I'm home!'

With my background, my parents' stories mattered, and so I had a publication. There's a big sense of frustration that I didn't pursue that. But I always wanted to be a writer because I thought that I could affect change, more than being a land-hoarded politician who would get ruined by something I don't want to do. Or get killed because I didn't want to compromise my values.

And I've come that in politics, especially here at home, you do have to compromise to make any sort of change whatsoever. I refuse to compromise so I think writing is the best thing for me.

NOVEL Prize

FINALS. Grip Yuan interviews Miguel

JUDGING A BOOK. Tony Hidalgo and Miguel Syjuco

Race the route

F1 fans can score a free trip to Singapore

SO YOU'RE A RABID FAN OF F1 racing, and you've been obsessively following the Singapore Grand Prix. While it's now impossible to fly to Singapore in time for the race, with flights and hotels booked solid, you can still wing your way to the land of the Merlion. Here's how:

1. Super readers 18 years and above can join. All you need is a valid passport that will expire on Sept. 30, 2008, onwards.

2. From Aug. 30 to Sept. 27, three trivia questions about F1 and the Singapore Grand Prix leg will be published each week in the pages of Super.

However, last week, we unpublished the e-mail address for the entries. You can e-mail your answers to last week's questions to singaporegp@gmail.com (and not Gmail, as we stated last week).

a. What is the required distance covered by an F1 race?

b. What is the top speed of a Formula One TM car?

c. Name one famous landmark in Singapore.

This week is an entirely different set. The questions are:

a. What do you call the book that contains the rules and regulations of Formula One?

b. What do you call the world's tallest observatory wheel found in Singapore?

c. What is the world famous party event where race drivers and other celebrities rub wings after the F1 race?

3. E-mail your answers along with your complete name, address and contact numbers to singaporegp@gmail.com. All entries with the correct answers will automatically qualify for the Super Challenge.

4. On Sept. 27, we'll announce the names of the participants who qualify for the Super Challenge. Qualified participants will be asked to submit a short essay on the Grand Challenge question, "What makes Singapore a perfect F1 destination?" But don't go writing down everything we say for you, we'll get to touch with you first if you qualify!

5. The winner will get two round trip tickets to Singapore and a 40/38 hotel accommodation for two. Prizes are valid from Nov 1, 2008, to March 31, 2009, subject to flight and hotel availability. Prizes are transferable but non-convertible to cash.

Five other entries will win Singapore Tourism Board gift packs.

LION. 1st

FERRIS wheel. 2nd

Super's top five favorite things to do in Singapore

1. Ride the Singapore Flyer.
Singapore is a relaxed icon is the world's tallest observation wheel, standing at 165 meters. That's the equivalent of a 42-story building. The observation cabins seat 28 in an air-conditioned and UV-protected.

2. Shop at Orchard Road.
Set aside a full day for shopping. Believe us, you'll need it. From high-end boutiques to luxury brands like Louis Vuitton and Prada to quirky boutiques, you'll find everything you need in Singapore. Electronics are dirt cheap too. If you're not sure where to look.

3. Eat at hawker centers. Chili crab, chicken, beef and pork satay, Hainanese chicken rice, spicy Laksa... all of these can be found in hawker centers across the city. A must try for first timers is the hawker center at Newton.

4. Make a mark at the business of youth.
This is Singapore's largest hangout mall complex, listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the one of it's largest business in 1968. At night, the boutique sets the stage for laser performances.

5. Take souvenir photos at the Merlion Park and Esplanade. You've never been to Singapore if you don't have any photos with the Merlion (Singapore's icon) and the Esplanade. These two icons of the city will stand as a testament to the upcoming 2008 Formula One Singtel Singapore Grand Prix on Sept. 28.

SUPER BUBBLE

nano-chromatic.

iPod nano.

Now in eight amazing colors.

With eight amazing colors, a new curved design, and great new features, iPod nano rocks like never before. The Genius feature finds the songs in your library that go great together and makes a Genius playlist for you. Give iPod nano a shake to shuffle your music. Turn it on its side to flip through album art with Cover Flow. iPod nano puts up to 4,000 songs or 16 hours of video in your pocket.[2]

Get into the groove of the all new iPod nano, available in stores now.

List of resellers: Mumbai

Authorized Reseller

For authorized resellers listing, please visit www.asia.apple.com/buy/locator.

SUPER EXCLUSIVE

Girls in the 'Hood

Before 'Gossip Girl' and 'Ugly Betty,' there was the 'Sisterhood of Traveling Pants.' Meet the four girls of the Sisterhood—Amber Tamblyn, Alexis Bledel, America Ferrera and Blake Lively, as they talk about the sequel to the hit estrogen-fest

BLAKE Lively lights up the screen.

PRETTY SETTY. Sisterhood's America Ferrera.

What was the scariest moment while filming in Greece? Was it riding the donkeys or taking the plunge?

America: Or riding the mopeds!

Amber: We got in a very little moped accident the very first day of shooting, and actually Blake hurt her knee really bad, and America fell off her bike and spun around. It was very dramatic and great for a first day of shooting.

Blake: It was Amber's fault. (*laughs*)

Amber: Right, it was my fault. For the record. Even though Blake was right on my back.

Alexis: It was a disastrous ellen.

Alexis: That was definitely the scariest.

Amber: It was good because I got so many bits of them on crutches. My favorite part.

Blake: She would take me crutches. She would go in our room and steal them. But that was the scariest part.

Alexis: The jumping over bar. The donkeys were easy. You just sit on them, right? We don't have to talk about it. What else?

Amber: Oh, Greece is amazing.

Blake: The food there was just amazing and there are so many neat ruins. The ruins were wonderful with the crashes because the rocks are nothing as you're trying to get up there. It was incredible.

So from the time you were younger?

Amber: Not really. I think that Blake and America and I were just walking around the island there and found a cliff that some other people were jumping off of, and then we sort of talked ourselves into doing it and then later came and told the producers and director that we should put this in the movie. There we got there and there was a whole crew and a bunch of people. We kind of got a little camera-shy about it.

You four developed a friendship doing the first movie. This film seems to be about reconnection. How did you guys keep your friendship going when you are all so busy?

America: E-mail, texting and an "Holiday" season.

Blake: Every so often such other whenever we're in the same town, which isn't often.

You had creative input into the development of your characters. Did you draw on your personal experiences?

Amber: Everyone was really open to us giving our own input. Certainly for me, my character gets to do quirky, brassy selfish lines and stuff like that. But my character has a very narcotic self-loathing aspect to her in this film, and oftentimes she funnels those feelings through humor, by trying to make other people laugh and ignoring what's going on with her. I have pulled that from several friends that sort of do that.

How different is your personal style from that of the characters you play?

Blake: Well, Bridget is like Indiana Jones, and I don't dress like that. I don't wear cowboy outfits, or anger in very different. It was just honestly like Indiana Jones in this movie. It's crazy. It's awesome, but I dress a little different. We had a wonderful costume designer, and I chose also the such a good job at carving out each character's personal style and she was able to tell a bit of a story with her clothes as well.

Amber: I think clothes are a big part of self-expression when you're that age, and **specifically for my character, Carmen,** she wanted to show her having kind of climbed in to a shell or a cocoon. So, unlike me, she's basically, she's wearing sweaters, she's trying to get more dressed for her and the world, **and she's just trying to hide in it. In the end,** when she emerges in this amazing period romance—which I took home and sit and watch TV in often, by the way (laughs)—it really was an arc in terms of self-expression through what you're wearing.

Alexis: Lanie's costumes are very feminine and '50s style. And I think it makes a lot of sense of her character. I like some things like that, but not all the time.

Amber: I think you're a little more rosebud-ish sometimes.

Alexis: Yeah, I like something a little more sleek. Although today I'm wearing something of sweat.

Do you have dreams for the future of your characters? Have you thought about where these characters might wind up in another five years?

America: More importantly than where we would be in our separate journeys, I think that this movie is about friendship and it's about this special bond and how friendships change throughout your lifetime.

I always thought that this movie was not so much about what each of the girls were going through, as much as how what they're going through affects their bond.

So, I don't know. They are 19, so they would be like 24. I don't know. What's friendship like at 24? What would they go through?

You're all accomplished role models. What keeps you grounded? Is it the people around you? Your family?

America: I just want to work. I just want to do my job and I just love what I do, and I have very no much respect for the work so even jeopardize my ability to do my job.

Blake: It's so funny, for me, my whole family was in this business. They didn't stay in it. But at the end of the day, that was just their job like any other people's jobs. I don't think it's the thing for me. At the end of the day of work, I want to go to dinner, and I want to watch a movie. I don't want to go to a club.

Alexis: Yeah, I've always thought of it as a job and I've never had time either to get into trouble. When I was in the show, it was a lot to do. So, yeah, I'm a pretty low-key person anyway.

The Sisterhood of Traveling Pants 2 will be released worldwide by Warner Bros. Pictures, a Warner Bros. Entertainment Company.

Blake Lively: 'It was just honestly like Indiana Jones in this movie. It's crazy. It's awesome, but I dress a little different'

Ride the Wind

Which ultraportable gives the most value? The MSI Wind U100

By Adel Gabot
Contributor

LAPTOPS, NETBOOKS, ULTRAPORTABLES, whatever you want to call them—They're becoming ubiquitous, which is how they should be. As new manufacturers' mouses pass (with a little grammatical improvement), they are easy to use, easy to work on, easy to play with.

Let's add two more to these: easy to buy and easy on the pocket. You can get one for the price of a middling cell phone. And they're all over the place. What's not to like?

But as new models pop up the netbook-room other a heavy rain, you now choose what's right for your budget (like everything else in life).

There are those with more memory, some with hard disks instead of small solid state drives, others with bigger and brighter screens, still others that come with better software, and all other permutations and configurations you can dream of.

So which one gives the best value? We think we've found a good contender for that title: The MSI Wind U100.

Good idea

At first glance the name seems like a poor joke, or the product of uninspired marketing. Wind? Coming in the wake of Apple's MacBook Air, isn't it too close for comfort?

And the jokes. If it looks cool, does that mean you broke Wind?

But as we said before, we can see why it seemed like a good idea. The ultraportable is very capable, as it is outfitted with the **processor of choice for ultraportables,** the Intel Atom. It runs faster, and is better, cooler, more economical than any other current chip. It runs like the, uh, wind.

Big-screened beauty

The most heard of complaints about the first netbooks were the tiny LCD screens that didn't even take up the entire frame where the screens should be. The new and slightly more expensive ones corrects this limitation, and the U100 Wind has one of the better ones. Literally bigger and brighter than most, the 10-inch screen almost makes you forget you're not on your desktop computer. Well, almost.

Full complement

The MSI Wind has a full complement of ports, like most of its brethren but has more underneath the hood, like an 80-gigabyte hard drive (even non hard I-Hight), a full gig of RAM out of the box, and comes installed with Windows XP and other software.

It does everything the bigger ones do, and runs them as fast as the, uh, wind loops, we used that analogy already). If MSI only managed to add an optical drive, it would, really, really rock. But as things go, you'll need to buy an extra.

Tradeoffs

Some things still make you wish for a "real" laptop: the keyboard (while bigger than most) is still undersized and not ideal for long-term use. The MSI Wind's trackpad buttons are even a bit thinner, and are still of a pain as well.

And the battery could be beefier, but we figure they had to cut corners somewhere after everything else they'd added on. Good thing they aren't on level items, then.

Sweezy

It looks cooler than most netbooks, with its lid having a glossy finish. The build quality is better than other netbooks, with only the MSI Wind even qualifying as more robust and classy. Pitch everything to it, it seems a little heavier to lug around. But performance is what matters, and the MSI Wind flies faster and better than most in its class.

MacBook Lite

The flexibility of the Wind (like some other netbooks) allows the use of other operating systems, but any of the modern-minded (and untethered) features of the MSI Wind is taken out of travelling the usually snowy Mac OS X.

Of course, this still requires some special tweaking and patching that might scare the let of Steve Jobs and get you absolutely torn support and sympathy from Apple and MSI. The irony thing is that it works as a Mac, and it works mostly perfectly. And if you saw a white Wind, it almost looks like a small MacBook.

All these will just set you back around P25,995 for the SU Ultimate. If you're on the market for a netbook, among all the choices around before you to be cybernaid, the Wind is something you won't go wrong with.

26U LIFESTYLE
Editor Thelma Sioson Sanchez Chief of Correspondents Pius Pastor

Ateneo vs La Salle

Our fearless forecast

Here's a preview of the UAAP Season 71 finals

By Adrian Dy

OFFENSE

Ateneo Blue Eagles

- 73.9 points a game
- 30.6 percent three-point field goal percentage
- 41.87 percent field goal percentage
- 73.57 percent free throw percentage
- 36.27 assists per game

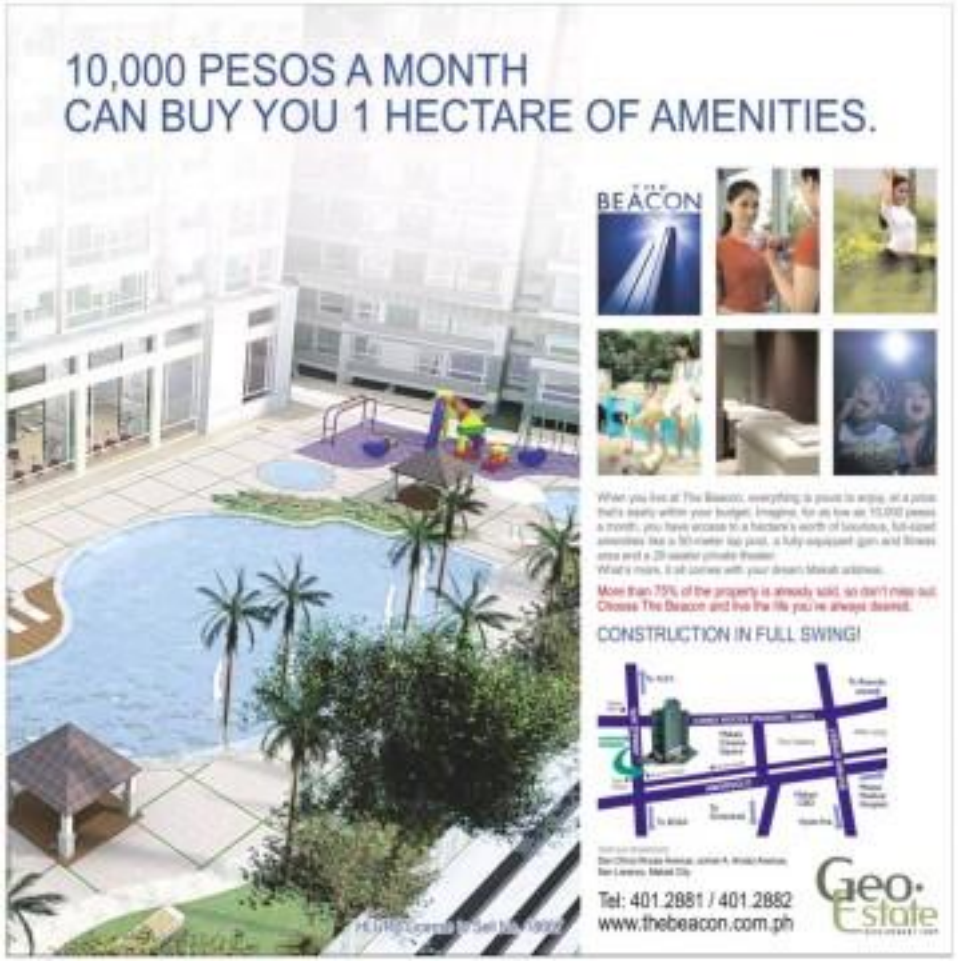
Ateneo may be known more for its defense, but its offense seems unsolved. Having Rabeh Al-Hussaini in the center really helps a team's field goal percentage, but what's great about this team is its unselfishness and ability to hit free throws in the clutch.

EDGE: Ateneo

La Salle Green Archers

- 75 points a game
- 31.28 percent three-point field goal percentage
- 44.28 percent field goal percentage
- 64.67 percent free throw percentage
- 14.34 assists per game

La Salle does score more, especially from beyond the arc. But rookie JV Casio is the one handling the ball, don't move often, thus not many opportunities to score in the fastbreak. Plus... they're extremely erratic at the line and don't really have a big man to just throw the ball to down low for easy post up points, and the one guy to do so...



Ateneo vs. La Salle

Our fearless forecast

MONROY
Barlan

LUIS
Lorenzo
Gonzaga

KIRK Long

NORMAN Black

CHRIS
Tiu

JAMES Mangahas

RICO
Maierhofer

PERJAY
Belvis

DLSU
Coach Franz
Pumaren

ALVIN
Joseph
Mitaoma

DEFENSE

Ateneo

61.07 points allowed per game
24 percent opponent's three-point percentage
31.73 percent opponent's field goal percentage
Serves as the best defense team in the league; dumb out its record 20-point dismantling of the UE Red Warriors. What's great about this defense is, they're flexible. Whether you're running or setting up to the half court, the Blue Eagles can stop you.
EDGE: Ateneo

La Salle

66.86 points allowed per game
27.04 percent opponent's three-point percentage
39.24 percent opponent's field goal percentage
La Salle still has its famous press, but it's done it less consistently this season. It doesn't help that its point guards and center players are like doves, letting jaw-to-jaw with impunity.

HUSTLE

41.27 rebounds per game
5.73 steals per game
4.4 blocks per game
Ateneo is a problem in the passing lanes, often setting off Ateneo fast breaks. Simon Enciso is the second best shot blocker in the league, and gives Ateneo a ton of extra possessions. The only problem: Given Al Abanes's size, it's a wonder why he's not averaging double-digit rebounds and at least a block per game.
EDGE: Ateneo

39.13 rebounds per game
5.65 steals per game
2.65 blocks per game
La Salle's prime allows it quite a number of steals, and this is **where its point guards, especially Simon Atkins, shine.** Its problem is that its centers contribute next to nothing in terms of rebounds and blocks, proving a ton of pressure on Blatche and Jansen Mangahas to do some serious defense.

GUARD ROTATION

Starters: Jai Reyes, Chris Tiu
Off the Bench: Eric Salamat, Yeo Taeyeon, Rich Long
What looked like a shaky position at the start of the season has really stabilized for Ateneo. Besides the team's versatile, crunch-time leader Chris Tiu, Jai Reyes and Yeo Taeyeon have really evolved into lock-down defenders. Reyes, in the last few games, has regained his shot, hitting triples and stop and pops to help spread the floor even more, while Salamat is a smart but break machine. If Rich Long relearns how to shoot, La Salle will be incredible.
EDGE: Ateneo

Starters: Simon Atkins, JV Casio
Off the Bench: JA Sevilla, Butler Maldoza, Ryann Bagunas
The point guard position is still a mess for the Green Archers. Simon Atkins can score, rebound and pass, but rarely in the same game. JA Sevilla and Ryann Bagunting are similarly one-dimensional. Casio is the stand-out, of course, making any shot he wants, but if the last four games are any indication, we'll have to amend that to "any shot he wants, as long as it's not a three." Butler Maldoza is no list-er suite.

FORWARD ROTATION

Starters: Ryan Buenafe, Nonoy Baclao
Off the Bench: Baron Aurrets, Nico Salva, Mike Hidalgo
While Baclao is the last line of defense of this team, Ateneo's other front-court players are questionable at best. Ryan Buenafe, the hands-down rookie of the year, can score and dish, but he's a massive poster and sometimes hassles bad nights when the team least needs them. Aurrets and Baldwin are insane more for their defensive presence than scoring abilities, and Nico Salva is inconsistent at best.
EDGE: Ateneo

Starters: PJ Burns, James Mangahas
Off the Bench: Mard Villanueva, Ben Mauterdow, Joshua Webb
Combining Burns and Mangahas with Casio, Maierhofer or Revilla from Archers' guard corps spells the possibility of a mix of perimeter shots, a scary prospect for any team. Mangahas stood out last Sunday, Dunkley in a strong performance that essentially punched La Salle's ticket to the Finals. Maierhofer has been shaky, but when he's made up his mind to attack the basket and not settle for jumpers, look out.
EDGE: La Salle

CENTER ROTATION

Starter: Rabeh Al-Hussaini
Off the Bench: John Sherwin Ildefonso, Theo Bader
Most Valuable Player front-runner Al-Hussaini is the reason the Eagles' rebound record this season, and he's only gotten better and more intelligent, leaning out better and kicking the ball out more when double-teamed. When given reliefers, Ildefonso and even Bader have made a sizable impact this season and, against a weak La Salle frontline, may be given license to overstay their time often.
EDGE: Ateneo

Starter: Ferdinand
Off the Bench: Andrew Wahlstrom
How bad are La Salle's big men? Their numbers combined are 2.9 points, 3.2 rebounds, 0.7 blocks. That's comparable to a single back-up center from most teams! In all fairness, Coach Franz Pumaren will be using them as stalking fall-givers against Al-Hussaini, as any offensive rebound or put-back from these two players can be seen as a bonus, rather than something to be expected.

HEAD COACH

Nicholas, Coach Norman Black has done a fine job this season, turning a team many thought would be five-seeds at best, into the team to see is all. This coach's strength is his ability to preach defense and have his word listen. So far, they're really been taking it to heart. Tom is a beach for mapping out clutch plays (UST games, anyone?), and there's no reason to think an Ateneo collapse is inevitable.

Well, maybe there's one reason: Franz Pumaren, who almost always manages to pull a rabbit out of his hat at the last minute. Pumaren has been on this stage more times than any coach in modern UAAP history, and with his line-up almost intact from last season's Finals, La Salle might be able to give Ateneo a run for its money.
EDGE: La Salle

MOMENTUM

There's nothing quite like coming off a 20-point blowout in the semi-finals to get you pumped up for the real thing. Also, unlike in previous seasons, you can say that this Ateneo team is at its peak, entering the Finals when everybody is ready to do his best.
EDGE: Ateneo

If you're La Salle, you're happy to be in the Finals, but hey, you really stumbled into the Championship round, winning your last four games by only 3.75 points. And—your best player has made only one triple in four games, your second best player has been nothing for outside jumpers, and you're praying that your role players will have a fighting chance. Or—well, there's always next season.

FINAL PREDICTION

In the end, this game really comes down to depth across multiple positions, and how that per-spective, Ateneo looks to be the champion. Against a motivated UE Red Warriors, Ateneo managed to build a 20-point lead after twelve consecutive minutes in the first quarter, despite below-average games from Chris Tiu and Rabeh Al-Hussaini.

Granted it's highly unlikely that the Blue Eagles could build that large a point difference over the Green Archers...there was games this season were decided by 6 and 10 points—but has to be the same thought UE had going into their semi-final.

Truth is, a lot has to go right for La Salle to win. Both Maierhofer and Casio need to submit MVP-caliber performances, they'll need silhouette rebounds and blocks from the center position, tight ball possessions from their guards, and dead-eye perfor-mance from their dominant snipers. And then they'll need to hope that more than two Blue Eagles have sub-par games.

Look for La Salle to start both games on fire, only to have Ateneo slowly and then back in and win with 5- to 10-point margins.

Caught in a bout of school pride

I'm so proud to be part of the Ateneo rah-rah crowd

By Portia Sibo
Ateneo de Manila University

THE LAST SEASON Final Four, with the exemption of **examinations week, is probably** the busiest period in a typical Ateneo's life. Personal calendars, organizers and life cases are heavily decorated with little, neon-bright **post-it notes that usually say** "Line up for tickets as early at 5 a.m.," or "Attend earlier Phildats to watch the game live."

College basketball, from **where I see it, has been treated** with so much passion that even hell week can't stop students and professors alike from trooping to to-morrow Coliseum or to the TV set planted right in the middle of the school cafeteria just to watch the games live.

And people don't just discuss **how a match went or predict** whether or not Captain Chris Tiu will score more than 12 points for the opposing game.

Several Ateneans have actually gone out of their way and come up with their own gimmicks and rackets to heighten the UAAP hype on the campus. Student entrepreneurs, even sometimes, have created their lines of school shirts that scream the most familiar lines from theme and cheers. There are also shirts with rudimentary Blue Eagle logos.

Grubhead shirts, created by UP graduates from Chris Tiu and Rabeh Al-Hussaini.

Another Management graduate Kirk Damasco, are the most popular among students. Brooke jokes include "I am a self-confessed Ateneo-holic," "Fight, fight Blue and White!" and "I heart Ateneo".

Given on a normal non-game day, it's impossible to try to count and identify the sheer number of people walking their building to building wearing these shirts. Girls pair them with denim cut-offs and miniskirts, while boys don it with skinny jeans and chunky rubber shoes.

Drawbacks

The Blue Subtle Battalion, meanwhile, regularly raids the cafeteria to perform drumbeats while cheerleaders in their skirts sing, majestic jackets invite the crowd to support the basketball team. It's both irritating and delightful to be amused right in front of the humongous drums while you try hot foil, to purchase chicken sandwich in your mouth. You could always gobble it up on the way to class anyway.

Things become crazier when the school announces the schedule of releasing tickets. Hardcore fans would not only opt to take their classes the whole day, but would also go as far as camping out in the day before just to get hold of two Upper A or Upper B tickets.

Trudging along with their portable sleeping bags and knapsacks filled with junk food, reading essentials and playing cards, students line up outside the venue where tickets will be distributed. Chances are if you choose to sleep over in school, you'll meet the same old faces that were through this process during the first and second rounds of the ADMU-DLSU games.

They're the same people who bring hand-painted posters that read "It's a new 300,864 today" or "UP person comes the day" to the basketball matches. They're the same fans who sing every single school cheer and anthem all night, with their fists punching the air. They're the same crowd who shows the rest what it truly means when we proclaim, "Bang ning talagang magling Ateneo."

And I'm so proud to be part of this lot.

AUTHOR cheering at a game

I'm having an affair with my boss

DEAR JEWEL,

I am a fresh graduate, now working as an executive assistant to a big boss of a new company. I'm doing well, I like my job, and my officemates are great. I would call it perfect except for one thing. I'm having an affair with my boss.

He's 28, good looking, and well, good-looking. I know it's not proper, but I just can't help it. In truth, he really pursued me. I was hesitant at first but I couldn't resist him. I just hate the fact that we can't be seen in public together, much more tell everyone about us. He said he doesn't want to be talked about. Sometimes I think of quitting, but I really like where I am now.

Clare

Dear Clare,

You are now a professional, and professionals should act like professionals. What you are doing is risking everything you love about your job now. The fact that he doesn't want your pseudo-relationship to be out in the open should say something about his true intentions.

Another thing, do you really want to be the butt of office jokes when this blows up? Slimy finds working environment is never forever. Intervention or "approval" and calling you to bring your boss a "fix" could really get messy. You say you love your job, so take good care of it, and it doesn't mean getting cozy with the boss.

However, you have rewarded the time already. If you are strong enough to tell him that you should quit whatever you're doing, you will be his assistant, do it. Otherwise, you cannot to be humiliated to another (in-)convenient if your reality must to stay in the computer.

If I'm wrong about him and he really does love you and wants to be with you, then's great, but I still think you should quit being his assistant. It will just cause gossip—like getting a raise just because you're his girl.

Don't forget to always look the boss,

Jewel

Away from each other

I used to be against long-distance relationships. I thought it was pointless to keep a relationship when, clearly, there are better things to do than wait for your boyfriend to come home. Then I fell in love. Within weeks of the relationship I had to fly overseas for a scholarship, and we find no choice but to be apart.

I miss him so much, and I had no idea it was this hard. I'm this close to giving up my scholarship to be with the love of my life. I worked hard to get this scholarship, and it's a prestigious one, too. I need to gain perspective quickly.

Clare Yahvah in Iriran

Dear Inlochcrotan,

It must be very hard to be separated from your boyfriend at the beginning of the relationship, when everything just seems so wonderful and perfect and all you want to do is cuddle all day long.

However, you seem to be a smart girl. Prestigious scholarships don't come along every day, not without the hard work you have invested.

Think of this as a test of resilience. Use all resources you have on hand—e-mail, chat, webcam, and free voice calls. Do what you have to do now, and build your foundation. Tempus fugit, and always be around, but if you are really sure to make it work, it will work.

Distance does make the heart grow fonder.

Jewel

E-mail Jewel at jewel.lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

LAP IT UP Cover your iPods and laptops with Karnivo cases.

HOT PINOYS

Wear your imperfections

NegativiTEE is the new positive!

By Tats Dias

PRAISING MADRASAH PI-losophy Tomador Basagulero,

Raise your hands if you're guilty. Good. None of us are perfect after all, just perfectly quirky.

Now you can actually wear your individual imperfections on your sleeves—literally. Check out a new tongue discovery called NegativiTEE, an original label peddling black T-shirts that proudly proclaim your own dark side in the kakiskosopo Pinoy dictionary.

You'll spend loads of time at the shop, too, identifying your friends via their respective T-shirts. After all, don't we all know someone out there who is Pasaway, Kulafuberin or Kupal? (Ginoo, gill dont mister has just gone out?)

NegativiTEE shirts are available at Greenhills Fantasia, 2/F Shoppesville, Eastwood...Cloth, 3/F citywalk 2 building, Eastwood City Libis Market—Manah & Stones, Galleria Apothecaire; Ayala Ave.—POP CULTURE, 2/F Building Tower Center. Or surf the web at http://negativitee.multiply.com. 09175346027

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Designer Karren Suarezes recently unveiled her newest black-and-pink line called Blink, the logo of which was designed by award-winning artist Peejay Dionisio. The collection is enough to inspire schoolgirl among lady rockstars everywhere.

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ATENEO Dalhousie

Ateneo de Manila University, Tuxes Tomatoes and Fine Arts Student Council from University of Santo Tomas, and Outdoor Club and Intrinsic Tuxe from the De La Salle University.

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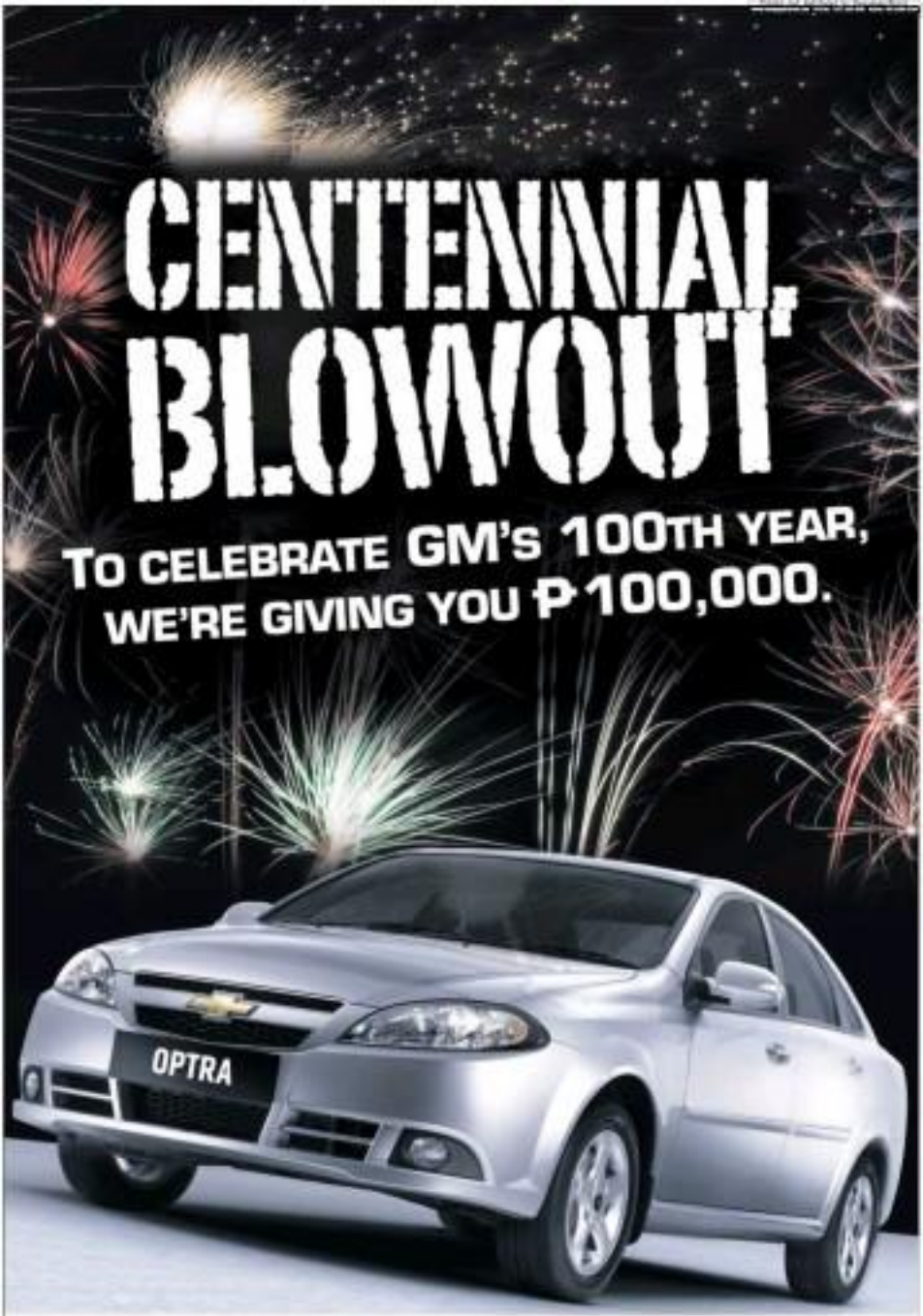

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Editor Nestor G. Torre
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SATURDAY Special

ALVAREZ AND SOZON. Portray the beloved former president and her martyred husband, Ninoy, respectively.

Isay Alvarez plays plum role of Cory Aquino in new musical

AFTER AN EXTENSIVE SEARCH AND SERIES OF auditions, the title role of Cory Aquino in the eagerly awaited new musical, "Cory!," has been cast: Acclaimed singer-actress Isay Alvarez will play the plum part of the country's beloved former president in performances slated at the Meralco Theater on Nov. 29, 30 and Dec. 1.

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TV promos take a plug-uglier turn

By Nestor U. Torre

DAILY THIS YEAR, WE POSITE ABOUT the "plug-ugly" practice of some TV channels of announcing their shows with seemingly endless plugs for their new programs, as well as for the movies of their sister companies. The plugs received scant mentions in remotivations, but mostly they were intrusive and unusual "irritants" that gobbled up huge chunks of program time, across the board.

We felt that the subjective use of TV resources hurt new programs and films severely compromised viewers' right to real entertainment, and urged roving channels to remind themselves that they were there to inform, entertain and inspire, not to boost the financial prospects of their own productions.

Extremities

Alas, our extremities appear to have fallen on deaf ears. The situation has not only not improved, but it has in fact worsened, especially with the return of primetime soap operas, and the start of new telecasts. From "plug ugly" to "plug uglier"! Oooh.

The wonder is that viewers appear to be taking it all quite submissively, even happily, with only a few complaints. Obviously, many of them don't mind being subjected to pardon-the-plugs from morning till night, especially if they're free. Or if, as cooing-attached entertainment they do get.

Perhaps it's because some of the plugs are couched in entertainment terms, with the productions' stars singing and dancing and charming their way into viewers' hearts.

We still feel, however, that viewers deserve better, less manipulative treatment than this. And the viewing public should become more aware of its right to really be informed (not only about upcoming productions), entertained (not insulted), instead of constantly being sold a bill of goods.

Even from a larger perspective, self-serving TV plugs for new shows and films also give big networks and their sister movie companies an unfair advantage over other channels and film studios. Quite a number of them have complained about this, in fact, pointing out that it makes for a playing field that is decidedly not level.

Potential victims

Indie producers are particularly affected, since they have only a little money to promote their productions on TV, where their biggest competitors dominate.

As it truth, they are overwhelmed by this extravagantly plugged competition, can't get good screening venues, and thus end up as also-runs.

What to do about this unfair situation? Viewers simply have to get past the endless plugs, educate themselves about the current production scene, and go out of their way to support the really worthwhile shows and films, despite their slim promo budgets.

Isay Alvarez plays plum role. . .

From page F1

Writer-director Nestor U. Torre and producer-composer Ryan Pinamont agreed that Isay was the best performer for the role, because she has the unique combination of well-honed singing, dancing and acting talents needed for the sexually challenging role.

In the course of Torre's musical, the character of Cory is involved in many varied scenes that show off different facets of her compelling personality, from her teen years in maturity as she contends with challenges that would distort many other people.

As a press conference last Sept. 16 at Acacia's on Roxas Boulevard, Quezon City, Pinamont and Torre also announced that the similarly prized role of Sissy Aguilar has been entrusted to a relative newcomer in theater, Sharmaine Suarez.

Talent and commitment

Suarez has had some performing experience in opera and classical music. Last year, however, he played the main lead in "Tarzan, Kuha Ka!," Torre's hit musical for the country's 50 Christmas community, and he impressed the writer-director with his talent and commitment. This, in addition to Sharmaine's close approximation of Nancy's "scent," prompted Torre and Pinamont to cast Sharmaine as Sissy.

The "Cory" musical focuses on Corazon Aquino, but her unique partnership with her martyr-husband is similarly high-lighted, as Isay and Sharmaine figure in a number of challenging scenes together.

Since they provide the musical's core, Isay and Sharmaine have had extra rehearsals, from the company to develop the unique artistic bond needed for their scenes to achieve their fullest impact.

PIMENTEL, Producer-composer of "Cory!"

What about their singing? At the production's recent press conference, Isay and Sharmaine ensured the media people present to their new songs from the musical, and their audience was enthralled as Isay and their singing voices intended together.

As for the "supporting" roles of the songs, some media people shared that they "got goosebumps"—suggesting well for the entire musical's effect on audiences when it finally starts its run at the Rhodora Theater in November and December.

Also starring in the much-anticipated show are other top actor-singers: Robert Seña as Ferdinand Marcos, Frida Montezon as Imelda, and Tommy Abuel, Lou Veloso, Shiro Sollo, Andy Bais, Shiela Asuncion, Edmund Nieves, Alka Dimson and Mina.

Sponsors are Bohar Isang Awit Foundation, San Miguel Corp., PLDT, ABS-CBN, GMA-7, Sen. Manuel Villar, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Megaworld Corp., Meralco, Rowell Barredo Group, Cosmos Century Malls, Strategic Alliance Development Corp., Lim Ket Kai Center, and Interchurch Foundation. Call Shiela at 891-03-20.

Daniel Radcliffe . . .

From page F1

front yet. The thing I've learned is that, I think, I'm more capable than I thought I was," he says with a laugh.

In London, Radcliffe won praise from the critics and audiences for his performance, which includes a brief nude scene, a moment that undoubtedly sold tickets to a minor "Harry Potter" fans. "That's the thing about shooting a film for an audience," he explains. "Everyone was wondering if I could pull it off. I didn't know whether I could do it, but I really wanted to. And I'm going to get better this time around."

For Radcliffe, training started with his stint for the past three years, he has worked with Barbara Hannigan, a respected vocal coach in England. "There are a lot of actors who think you can just go onstage and do it—you can't," he adds. "You need to project. You can give the most amazing performance onstage, but if the audience can't hear you, it's useless."

Hannigan is in New York for the show's previous performances, so Radcliffe prepares for opening night at the Broadhurst Theatre on Sept. 23.

Disturbing play

"The more relaxed, it's just the fact that I have grown up in the year and a half since we last did it," he confesses. "The other night, I got a little nervous, which, for me, was like a dagger, because I don't like making mistakes!"

"Equus" is an emotional and disturbing play, a mystery that steadily builds to a surprising climax. How does Radcliffe unwind from all that intensity?

"I go home and watch The History Channel, which is what I've been doing the last few nights," Radcliffe says with a laugh.

RADCLIFFE: "I don't like making mistakes."

Stage persona

Despite his new stage persona, Radcliffe will never be very far away from where he first earned his celebrity—those "Potter" films based on Rowling's seven books. The movie version of number six, "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince," is already in the can and comes out in July next year, after being bumped from November's lineup. Filming of the last "Potter" book, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows," begins after Radcliffe finishes his "Equus" run in February.

"I will be weathered, but I adore filming Potter," he admits. "I can't wait to get back there!" "Deathly Hallows" will be released in two movies—one in November 2010, and the last in the summer of 2011. Production is expected to take about 16 months. After that, maybe more stage work. "It's 10 years now, I've no clue where I'll be," Radcliffe muses. "Hopefully, I'll still be acting. If I'm acting and still enjoying it, I will be happy. I feel pretty certain that will be the case."

Tough love on 'Project Runway Philippines'

By Nestor U. Torre

WE CAUGHT "PROJECT RUNWAY Philippines" on its first telecast weeks ago, and liked its stylish appropriation of the original American franchise, with host Teresa Herrera striding high among our list of the show's plus points.

At the end of the episode, however, we were turned off when the fifth designer voted out was the fifth most mature finalist, who was decades older than the other contestants.

Senior designer

We wondered why a senior designer was included among the competition's finalists in the first place—and then immediately given her walking papers, it didn't make much sense, and came off as rather cruel.

There were other low points, like some people resigning as sound stylists, when, in fact, they weren't. But, we still ended up with a positive view of the CB, because some of the finalists' "creations" were truly promising.

That's why in the succeeding weeks, we would watch "Project Runway Philippines" from time to time, to see how the highly-a-maze finalists were faring.

Our heart went out to them as they did their darndest to beat deadlines, deal with each other's quirks, put up with catty remarks—and avoid getting eliminated.

HERRERA. Host in usual version of reality fashion (R).

As we kept watching, we saw how some designers' work improved from challenge to challenge. Some "fraidies" emerged, only to need up on the "chuck you girls" heap after a few more minutes. This made us realize how subjective some of the show's judges' verdicts could be. They meant well, but their personal preferences sometimes clouded their judgment.

On the other hand, we saw that some of the jurors' "tough love" approach was meant to psychologically prepare the finalists for working in the fashion industry after the competition. They were then instilled that, even if a young designer was talented, he wouldn't survive in the fashion trade if he were clueless and feckless.

Over and above all, "practical" considerations, however, it's the quality of the finalists' designs...and execution...that should separate the contenders from the castaways and the bystanders. A young designer can be tough as nails and "practical" as all heck, but if his or her creations aren't green, what would there be to develop and showcase?

Memory

But, the nurturing and developmental of exceptional talent is an art in itself—and some so-called mentory practice it clumsily. It's one thing to be "honest," but quite another to be vicious in the disparaging comments made about a young designer's work. If a contestant is too harsh, it could end up inducing an even suffering the very talent it's supposed to help develop.

So, we trust that the jurors-mentors on "Project Runway Philippines" can cut the show's harassed screwing finalists some slack, and remember that they are young and vulnerable. "Tough love" is fine—as long as the emphasis is on the noun, not the harsh adjective.

Scarcity of new plays . . .

From page F4

Bacon. Kristen Scott Thomas stars as a self-absorbed actress in a production directed by the London critics' fave, Peter Hanigand it is the American cast. The stage and multi-Olivier commoner on Oct. 1.

There's nothing wrong with a bit of borrowing, and there don't get much better than Sir Thomas More, who had the moral fortitude to stand up to Henry VIII and his desire for a divorce. The play is Robert Bolt's "A Man for All Seasons," and Shaw will be portrayed by an actor of uncommon ability Frank Langella.

Arthur Miller always was intrigued, too, by the battle between right and wrong...and the highly moral concerns of his late 1940s drama, "All My Sons," will get underway airing starting Oct. 16. Cast includes John Lithgow, Dianne Wiest, Patrick Wilson and, answering the most attention, Katie Holmes, possibly her former some people hope to see her husband, Tom Cruise, watching the her in the stage door after the evening performances.

The play tells the story of businessman Joe Keller (Lithgow), whose factory supplied defective cylinder parts to the military resulting in the deaths of 21 pilots during World War II. Wiest will play Keller's wife and Wilson, his idealistic son.

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Celebs resort to gimmickry to tickle viewing public's fancy

By Bebe Cervantes

IN THE DELIGHTFULLY HILARIOUS hit old Broadway musical, "Gypsy," a group of burlesque dancers demonstrates a performer's novel lure a gimmick to succeed in their seedy world. Because of the fierce competition to draw fat, even superstars resort to attention-selling gimmickry to make a dent in the public's collective consciousness.

Years Ago Once, Hollywood was aware of that novel. For example, it didn't think the public would accept a star with a name as simple as Roy—so it was changed to Rock (Hudson).

Star wannabes who wanted to make it big changed their plebian names to stellar sounding aliases—so, we had a Tab (Hunter), a Tony (Dexter), as well as many other names that inherited the class and status of a Rudolf Valentino.

Sometimes's stuckes also had to have the Hollywood "look". Promising starlets had pellets that could compete with John Barrymore's, while female starlets needed to have ample bosoms like Jane Russ's.

These days, plastic surgery that enhances stars' looks is common. It has even been considered to have a smaller waistline—ask Raquel Welch.

Stars are luminous with perfect features and whistle-bait figures, like Ava Gardner, Elizabeth Taylor and Arlene Dahl. Even the statuesque Jayne Lee Curtis suffers in comparison to her mom, "Psycho's" Janet Leigh. She, Joe Sterling and shower Miss Carpets had the shapelist bodies in the 1950s. And, then was Marilyn Monroe, the undisputed sexpot of that period!

Scandal

A San Diego television channel recently reported a scandal caused by sexual model tube, in a production of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." Instead of the balcony scene, the actress playing Juliet was shown in the nude, with her breasts exposed. Her co-star, playing Romeo, was shown in the buff, with his genitals exposed.

Among today's top celebrities, the most gimmicky has got to be Madonna—whose real name isn't even Madonna! The fiercely imaginative singer-dancer-actress/—one of Monroe's most famous musical numbers is "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," and shocked Catholics when she dressed crucifixes in her raunchy music videos.

Lurid entertainers are not beyond "manufacturing" their own gimmicks, either. Some of them sell themselves as outsiders who pick fights for effect, which always lead to talk-show guestings. They keep the public interested because of the controversies and "revelations" they create!

Gimmicks would be nonexistent if there were no market for them. But, media and some show biz personalities seem to thrive on them. So, what can the public do to discourage this practice? Ignore both the gimmicks and their creators! After all, they don't help improve the economy—that's for sure!

MADONNA...Copied the look and style of Marilyn Monroe.

Freedom from illusory energy

THE GREAT SAGES liken our condition in the material world to that of a man bitten by a poisonous snake. Due to their venom, we live in a comatose state —unconscious and unaware of the evil-lies around us. Deluded kept us in the dark, unable to think and communicate clearly. We feel lifeless and miserable.

What is the equivalent of the snake that has caused us suffering? It is called maya, the illusory energy that covers natural wisdom and intelligence. It makes us see things in a different way. It makes us identify ourselves with the body. But there's misfortune and pleasure in material wealth. It clouds our vision.

The snake of the maya have us turn troublesome materialistic pursuits, as if they're opposite of heaven on earth. Truth is, they're only expressways to hell. As a result, we fall into the pit of ignorance and experience the emptiness of material existence.

Intellect makes us run away from misfortune, knowing what a deadly bite can do to us. We always take every precaution to avoid areas where they thrive. Unfortunately, we're frequently insensitive to the dangerous lure and bite of the snake of the maya. Sometimes, we intentionally feed lifeless and miserable.

LOTUS POND
R. Valencia and S. Bismark

even drug others into its pit. We envy a politician for his power, wealth and popularity, but disregard his arrogance and corruption. That's how deceptive illusory energy is!

Qualities

In India, mantras are used to help cure victims of snake bites. Similarly, freedom from illusory energy is achieved by chanting the names and qualities of the Supreme Being. Such prayerful chanting eats away the veil of illusion and counteracts the poisonous effects of materialism. Let's rise from our comatose condition and enjoy an existence characterized by wisdom, satisfaction and peace!

Movies about disabilities inspire viewers

By Lila Bartolome-Rivera

ONCE IN A WHILE, WE COME ACROSS movies that herald the triumph of the human spirit over adversity and tragedy. Here are some movies that deal with overcoming one's physical handicap.

"Lorenzo's Oil" (1992) is about Lorenzo Odone and his parents (Susan Sarandon and Nick Nolte), who tirelessly search for a cure for his rare disease. As they see their child waste away, they eventually face the skepticism of doctors. But, their efforts finally pay off when they chance upon a therapy that uses olive oil to stop his enzyme agony.

"Philadelphia" (1993) tells the true story of Andrew Beckett (Tom Hanks), a gay lawyer who is fired by a large law firm in Philadelphia after his bosses find out he has AIDS. In court, Beckett is awarded punitive damages on grounds of discrimination. Also starring Denzel Washington as Beckett's lawyer, the movie exposes the negative public perception of people with HIV and AIDS, and tackles homosexuality and homophobia.

True story

"A Beautiful Mind" is the true story of math genius and Nobel Prize winner, John Forbes Nash Jr. (Russell Crowe), who was able to solve problems that overwhelmed even the most brilliant mathematicians. It depicts how he overcame immense suffering while battling schizophrenia. With the help of his wife (Jennifer Connelly), he recovered, went back to teaching and was later awarded the Nobel Prize.

"A Brief History of Time" (1991) is a documentary about the life and work of Stephen Hawking, a physicist afflicted with the life-threatening neurological disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). Hawking lost the ability to use his arms, legs and voice, leaving him almost completely paralyzed and wheelchair-bound. Despite his severe disability, the physicist was eventually recognized by the scientific community for his contributions to cosmology and quantum gravity.

The most inspiring aspect of Hawking's disability-ridden life is his brutally dispassion and outlook: He observes, "I was unlucky to get a motor neurone disease, but I'm lucky in almost everything else. I have three very attractive children, success in my scientific work, and a real sense of satisfaction at having achieved all of this, despite the difficulties."

"LORENZO'S OIL." Enduring search for cure finally pays off.

GARFIELD — By Jim Davis

AL LIPIN — By JOEL LAMBINO

FUSSO BABOY — BY RYL JUNIOR

DICK TRACY

LOVEKNOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHOMICKI

PAANO KO MALALAMAN KUNG MAHAL NGA AKO NG ISANG TAO?

Danish drama boosts Cine Europa lineup

MIKKELSEN. Nightly Susanne Bier's "After the Wedding."

By Nestor Torre

CINE EUROPA HAS BEEN AN annual event here for more than 10 years and it's nourishing that film buffs have always looked forward to. After all, it's not often than one gets a chance to sample the cinematic offerings of other countries apart from the US and the last time it's free is the yesteryear ring on the calm.

This year, the festival is featuring more than a dozen films from Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Romania, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The selection ranges from quirky comedies to family dramas, so there should be something here for everyone.

One of the films you should watch is Denmark's entry, Susanne Bier's "After the Wedding." Dramatic and highly nuanced, the film has a plot that could have been lifted from a sentimental soap, with plenty of twists, secrets and hidden motives.

Superb cast

But, Bier's focus, spare direction and low-keyed tone save it from descending into melodrama. The emotional intensity is kept high throughout the film, but it's tempered by quiet moments, as well as by a pervading atmosphere of psychological unease.

Shot in wonderfully stylic, the camera moves around almost briefly or tense, giving snapshots, instead of panoramas, and heightening a feeling of disquiet.

The focus is really on the actors, who each give performances of great depth and texture. Mads Mikkelsen stars as Jacob, a Dane who manages an orphanage in India, and whose life enters a new by the unexpected when a potential benefactor makes future funding for the failing orphanage dependent on Jacob's going back to Denmark for a visit.

Paunted by the demand has having to choose, Jacob flies back to the country he hasn't seen in 20 years—and quickly discovers that this visit is more than it seemed.

Screen presence

Mikkelsen, who gave a memorable performance as the bad guy in "Casino Royale," is equally unforgettable here. His Jacob is brooding, taciturn and reserved, and Mikkelsen has no big scenes but remains thoroughly watchable.

In the words of his fellow actors, particularly Rolf Lassgard, who plays Jorgen, the billionaire who haves decide the invitation, they manage to hold their own—and how some.

Lassgard's Jorgen is big, hearty and, at turns, frantic and tender. It's a multilayered performance that's fascinating to watch. Sidse Babett Knudsen, who plays Jorgen's wife, and Stine Fischer Christensen, as the daughter whose wedding is the one mentioned in the title, also give well-rounded performances.

Showing this weekend are "And When Did You Last See Your Father?," "Children of the Wind," "After the Wedding," "Bonny in Trouble," "Love Songs," "Tri Fristo, 14 Fristar," "Chemical Hunger," "100 Steps," "Night Name" and "Colonels Inserts."

After its Manila run, Cine Europa will be screened at Ayala Center Cebu from Sept. 26 to 28 and at the Limketkai Cagayan de Oro from Oct. 3 to 5.

Daniel Radcliffe prepares for daring stage role

NEW YORK—DANIEL RADCLIFFE is talking about Alan Ayckbourn, the troubled young man he plays in "Equus," the Peter Shaffer drama being revived on Broadway.

"The brilliant thing about Alan is that you wouldn't notice him walking down the street," teases Radcliffe. "He's incognoscenti. He's like Alec Guinness in all those films where he just becomes invisible as soon as he walks into a crowd."

Boy wizard

Invisible is not a word you'd use to describe Radcliffe when, at age 19, he probably one of the most recognized young actors in the world, thanks to a certain boy wizard named by J.K. Rowling. Even devoid down in jeans, black leather jacket, grey T-shirt and the slightest scruff of a beard (which does nothing to make him look much older than his early two decades), Radcliffe draws stares as he strides confidently through an office-building lobby.

Upstairs in a television studio, he expounds on the character of Strang, the pivotal role in Shaffer's play, which tells the tale of why this youth blinds a stable of horses. Words pour out—youthful in their enthusiasm and surprisingly solid in their perception: "Alan is not academically bright, but he has amazing intellect," Radcliffe muses, adding that though the boy "might be considered slightly simple and gentle, he has incredible imagination."

"Equus" was a big hit on Broadway in 1974, with Peter Firth in Radcliffe's role and Richard Burton playing Dysart, the psychiatrist who tries to unlock his secret. Dysart's part is now being played by Richard Griffiths, who costarred with Radcliffe in the 2007 London production of "Equus," and who portrays sunny Uncle Vernon in all those spectacularly successful Harry Potter movies.

Griffiths and Radcliffe are charter members of a surreal subculture society. Says the older actor, a Tony winner for "The History Boys," of Radcliffe: "I'm really pleased with him! He's right at this awful stage of moving from being a child actor to an adult."

Compliment

And Radcliffe returns the compliment: "To work with Richard's courage and in a much more intimate way than Vernon in the Potter films is amazing. His intellect is huge. But, he's not snobbish with the knowledge he has. He shares it and wants to talk about it. I find real joy to be around him. For me, it seemed I would have to be really cinematic not to take the piss."

But, there's another reason why he decided to theater: "The stage is much more a test of nerve than film, and seeing what you're made of," Radcliffe explains. "Even if I screw up, it's good to learn what my limits are. It's good to get a sense of what I can and can't do. Luckily, I haven't found

DANIEL FI

RADCLIFFE. Grows up in "Equus."

"DIVIDING THE ESTATE." Marian Foster's new production opens next month.

Scarcity of new plays noted on Broadway

NEW YORK—WHERE HAVE ALL THE new plays gone? On Broadway this fall, it will be the timely joke—"To Be or Not to Be" and "Dividing the Estate"—that will qualify as new works in a season studded with many revivals, such as "Equus" and "All My Sons."

Quite a change from last year, when the fall lineup had plays by Terry Teitz, Tom Stoppard, Conor McPherson, Aaron Sorkin, David Mamet and even Mark Twain.

"Broadway has been fairly unfriendly to new plays for a while," noted Daniel Sullivan, acting artistic director last season for Manhattan Theater Club, which will produce one of three new works. "When you're talking between $2 and $3 million, just for a five- or six-character play, you can't blame producers for being shy."

Familiar title

No wonder both "To Be or Not to Be" and "Dividing the Estate" are being produced by nonprofit, noncommercial theaters. "To Be or Not to Be" is a familiar title—at least to movie buffs. It's a stage adaptation by Nick Whitby of the 1942 film comedy starring Jack Benny and Carole Lombard about the tribulations of a theater troupe in Warsaw trying to open a play as the Nazis invade Poland. It was remade in the 1980s, starring Mel Brooks and Anne Bancroft.

The comedy, directed by Casey Nicholaw of "The Drowsy Chaperone," opens on Oct. 2 at the Samuel J. Friedman theater (formerly the Belasco). Heading the large cast are David Hyde Pierce and Jim Maxwell.

"Dividing the Estate" by Horton Foote arrives on Broadway after a successful off-Broadway run last season. The play, a revised version of a work that Foote wrote nearly two decades ago, concerns a Texas family's squabble over an inheritance. The comedy opens on Nov. 20 at the Booth Theatre with its all-Broadway cast.

Elsewhere on Broadway, it's big names in old plays: The parade starts with "Equus."

Nobody takes their clothes off in Anton Chekhov's "The Seagull" (as far as known), the master's wryly melancholic tale of unhappy aristocrats in late 19th century

MARGOT FI

THOMAS. Portrays an actress in the revival of Anton Chekhov's "The Seagull."

Health boosters

IN THE DEFTING WORLD OF life in the Philippines, many people forget to eat right and are deprived of sleep, rest and the nutrients needed to cope with the maddening pace. When Paul and Rhonda Insull, a PE teacher couple from San Leandro, California, visited the latter's hometown here, they had a first-hand look at the suffering of children and grownups alike brought about by nutritional deficiencies.

Rhonda, a nurse, and Paul, an engineer, were appalled by the high cost of medicine and wanted to do something that would allow people to enjoy effective but affordable health products.

Special-care clinic

So, they closed their special-care clinic in the US and began producing Natural Formula, a US Food and Drug Administration-approved line of vitamin supplements. In 1999, Rhonda's came home to obtain permits from the BFAD and introduced Natural Formula L-Glutathione pills.

Despite heavy competition, Rhonda's focused on her commitment to provide quality and affordable health products. Today, Natural Formula has 21 products being distributed by Mercury and Watson's outlets. Among them: L-Glutathione is a strong antioxidant that boosts the immune system; Vitamin E slows down aging, strengthens the heart and promotes younger-looking skin; Melatonin promotes sleep, and Ginkgo Biloba enhances memory.

STREET SMART

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IN THIS ISSUE
No slowing down for Rosa Rosal /G4

SATURDAY Spec

Willie Nep is the real McCoy

NEPOTRUCENO: In his comedy, purpose takes precedence over the need to generate cheap laughter.

By Rito P. Asido

"THERE'S NO PERFECT IMPRESSION," master impersonator Willie Nepomuceno told his bedazzled audience of theater artists during a recent lecture about how he remains the bigger-than-life chameleon he portrays in his highly acclaimed lounge acts and literary shows.

That night, though, Nepomuceno came pretty close to achieving perfection: With his bag of facial props and wigs beside him, he effortlessly switched from Ferdinand Marcos and Dolphy to Joseph Estrada and Fidel Ramos. —Willie Nep is the real McCoy!

THE MASTER: Impersonator as (from left) former presidents, Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada and Ferdinand Marcos.

Amusing anecdotes

That special lecture also proved that there's room in the brilliant performer than his cerebral wit and astonishing savvy. He dished out amusing anecdotes and helpful tips with endearing candor, generosity and the sincerity of a first-burned performer who just wanted to pay it forward.

Interestingly, for someone known for being bold and outspoken, Willie refused to comment about the gay impersonator controversy that predominate in show biz these days. Instead, his brand of comedy is the **demonically relevant kind that goes beyond the inflammatory or incendiary.**

He explained: "I don't want my work or burden my children or caricature." Sure enough, while he's most known for **mimicking** Erap and his macho company, playing the flower not isn't beyond him. "I've also done Meg Barros, Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Haydee Yorac," he recalled. —Not to mention Ina Encarnacion!

"Talent isn't enough," he disclosed. Willie also revealed that his most popular impersonations go through a rigorous preparatory process that involves hard work and research, and requires him to "map out areas of concern"...color spelling, social background, regional speech patterns, makeup and prosthetics, costuming, skin tone, facial symmetry, lighting, voice coordination and, to minimize mistakes, choreography. He advised: "Be a keen observer and learn as much as you can about the person, because what you know will help you during the performance."

Creating the illusion

But, the seasoned performer is also realistic: "While I put in a lot of work, I also know if I can realistically pull it off or sustain the illusion of a character. I don't do it if there's no way I can stand or seem like the subject, to his voice high or low enough? Am I young enough to play the character? Creating the illusion is what the audience's appetite or mind/impression is very important."

Most many of his acts bear politics and satire, Willie says he has his share of **detours, unlike as "literally reminders,"** but he remains unperturbed. He averred: "Unlike American celebrities, Filipino media personalities are often (semi-divided). I thought former President Fidel Ramos was one of them, because of his military background—but I was wrong! He gamely laughed at my impression of him and later told me, 'High-five ito!'"

But, what really sets Willie apart from **the rest of the comedic pack** is the fact that, in his comedy, purpose takes precedence over the need to generate cheap laughter. He distinctly remembers listening to "Mocoso Willie Nep," his Orlando Quisumbing-Bodjie Dimly-produced solo album in the 1990s, where, aside from playing Erap ("Ito cha Sherap") and Dolphy's two-timing John Paranjing character ("Opisina"), he effortlessly utilized a music-coated satirical duet **to forward the Filipino people's mounting** sentiments; the words are as true now as they were then.

In the title track, he "rapped": "Bitin has the country been so destitute as today/ The **Filipino has found himself the victim of his** every dreams, betrayed by the very people he proclaimed as his heroes/ Inflation continues to rise, entertainment continues to deteriorate, the nation remains divided/ ... The answer to our problems is not in votes, but in laughter!" —Pic ng, Amen!

WILLIE without the mask.

The truth about your period.

After this, you may notice what makes sanitary napkins truly safe and sanitary.

On the average, over a hundred different species of harmful bacteria are present in every square millimeter of a soiled sanitary napkin. Here so, symptoms such as fever, skin irritation, fatigue and nausea are related to bacterial infections during menstruation.

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GALLERIA

1 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	6 I.T.A.L.Y.
2 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	7 BABYLON A.D.
3 Indistinct: SINKLASIKS – ROSA ROSALS RIGHTEOUS KILL	
4 100 FEET	9 FOR THE FIRST TIME
5 IMAGINE ME and YOU	10 DEATH RACE

ERMITA

1 FOR THE FIRST TIME

2 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	6 RESERVED
3 BABYLON A.D.	7 RESERVED
4 I.T.A.L.Y.	8 RIGHTEOUS KILL
5 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	9 100 FEET

METRO EAST

1 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	5 BABYLON A.D.
2 ITALY	6 100 FEET
3 ITALY	7 FOR THE FIRST TIME
4 RIGHTEOUS KILL	8 GRAVEDIGGERS

NOVALICHES

1 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	3 RIGHTEOUS KILL
2 ITALY	4 BEYBIS

PIONEER

1 BABYLON A.D.	3 I.T.A.L.Y.
2 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	4 100 FEET

STA. ROSA

1 ROGUE	1 ITALY
2 PERFECT CREATURE	2 DEATH RACE
3 I.T.A.L.Y.	3 FOR THE FIRST TIME
4 BANK JOB	4 BIG STAN

LIPA

DASMARINAS

1 PERFECT CREATURE	1 I.T.A.L.Y.
2 I.T.A.L.Y.	2 RIGHTEOUS KILL
3 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	3 BANGKOK DANGEROUS
4 FOR THE FIRST TIME	4 FOR THE FIRST TIME

IMUS

ANGELES

1 ITALY	3 FOR THE FIRST TIME
2 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	4 LOST in BEIJING

STARMILLS

1 ROGUE	4 FOR THE FIRST TIME
2 I.T.A.L.Y.	5 BABYLON A.D.
3 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	6 PROJECT X

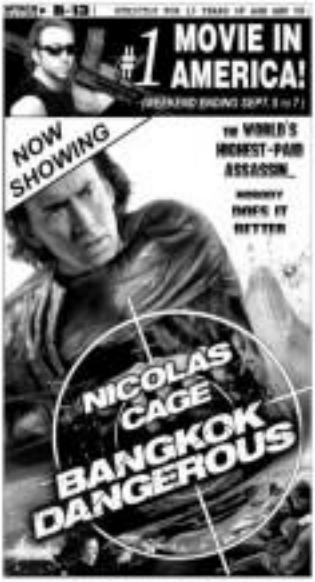
BACOLOD

1 BANGKOK DANGEROUS	1 BABYLON A.D.
2 I.T.A.L.Y.	2 BANGKOK DANGEROUS
3 BABYLON A.D.	3 I.T.A.L.Y.
4 DEATH RACE	4 DEATH RACE
5 FOR THE FIRST TIME	5 FOR THE FIRST TIME
6 BOY CULTURE	6 PROJECT X

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	HELLBOY 2: THE GOLDEN ARMY – PG13	RIGHTEOUS KILL – PG
MAMMA MIA – PG13	100 FEET! "SEX AND THE CITY – R13	BANGKOK DANGEROUS– R13

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



The Filipino as Survivor

By Nestor U. Torre

BECKONED. Host's local version of popular reality show

GAME ARE ONE longer shows on TV have little to do with real life—or, do they? Comparisons, both fair and unfair, may be perceived in the new "Survivor Philippines" program, which debuted last Monday, Sept. 15, on GMA-7, with Paolo Bediones hosting.

In Bobbi a varied mix of generally young Pinoys in a 39-day test of strength, guts, will power and survival instincts set on an island in Thailand.

The mix of contestants is what invites comparisons to the challenges Pinoys face in real life. Many of the 16 contestants have joined the competition to win the big money they need to turn their and their families' dire prospects around.

This "very Pinoy" emotional investment or baggage is generally absent from the original American version of the show. But, true to local TV's melodramatic and tearjerker bent, even the adventure-endurance format has been royally tweaked to include the subjective human factor, which is so excessively favored in these parts.

Real-life ordeals

Even the rare drought up for the show's contestants can similarly be tweaked to relate to some Filipinos' real-life ordeals.

As the stars of the first episode, the contestants were required to jump off a boat and swim for the island their would be their "home" for more than a month. Some contestants weren't good swimmers and this had a rough time coping with this first challenge. So, what did they do? They held on to each other—and one gallant swimmer helped another; weaker thrasher make it on the island's shore. —Way Pinoy!

On the island itself, the 16 contestants were forced to spend the night out in the open—and, in the rain. They all survived that chilling ordeal—again, in true "Its Pinoy" fashion!

The following day, they were subjected to different tests of strength, agility and skill, where teamwork was key to achieving rewards for their "tribes" that the contestants were made to form.

Now, teamwork isn't exactly a strong Pinoy suit (what with regionalism, barge-kotyo, tiggit and "crab mentality" going against us). —But, lo and behold, the contestants of the two tribes managed to rise above their apparent rainbow and bayan tendencies, and they generally worked well together to boost their respective tribes' (male vs. female) chances.

Right motivation

"Not very Pinoy, dun. —But, it was a good indication of what, given the right motivation, the Filipino could become.

Of course, aside from the physical tests, the 16 survivors will have to contend with the city's psychological components—and, this is where the tests could become even more challenging. After all, true to "Survivor" tradition, contestants will inspirationally be voted off by their own peers.

So, aside from being physically and mentally superior, the winning Sole Pinoy Survivor should be the contender who is best able to psych the competition, and will himself or herself to victory.

How will the Pinoy survivors fare in this key regard? The show's second telecast provided some negative indications, as quite a number of contestants teamed a lot of time arguing about leadership, work assignment, "chaos" and other issues. Enough of the one-rotating gabfest, please!—instead, focus on the rigorous test at hand!

'My Best . . .

From page 04

Marissa dela Pasion and Tyrone Lopez, and many to run at Robinsons cinemas on Sept. 24.

NYC weekend workshop

From Oct. 11 to Dec. 1, every Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m., Monique Wilson's acclaimed New Voices Company holds a weekend acting workshop, Acting For Teens and Adults, for ages 13 and above, at the NYC Actors Studio (call 896-3487 or visit www.newvoicescompany.com). Multi workshop leader and director is Dino Aviles.

Wilson has made a name for itself mounting acclaimed productions with exceptional artistic standards.

Gabby and I/M

I/M shirts' spokesperson, Gabby Concepcion, meets and greets fans at SM Marikina—tomorrow at 3:30 p.m. Gabby endorses I/M's evolving philosophy of comfort, convenience and style. The limited-edition shirts are available at SM department stores nationwide.

Seniors monthly

Neil T. Reyes is the publisher and editor in chief of the new Seniors monthly, which debuts this month with the "update" Idole Gerona on its cover. Also: "premiumonthly" featured

NOW SHOWING

Nicolas Cage's Asian actioner is lost in translation

By Rito P. Asido

"Bangkok Dangerous"

D: Danny and Oxide Pang
S: Nicolas Cage, Shahkrit Yamnarm

WE INTERVIEWED NICOLAS CAGE when he was shooting the Hollywood adaptation of Danny and Oxide Pang's Toronto film fest-winning action-drama, "Bangkok Dangerous," in Thailand two years ago.

The Oscar-winning actor told us that he really makes a common effort to choose roles that are significantly different from any one another—which explains why his movies are as diverse as they are quirky. Consider these titles: "National Treasure," "Moonstruck," "Leaving Las Vegas," "Adaptation," "Gone by Sun," "The Rock," "Raising Arizona," "Birdy," "Wild at Heart," "Face/Off" and "Peggy Sue Got Married"...(Una rensalde con psycgot)

Themes

Cage explained, "I don't want to have the audience make identical performances and repetitive themes. Sometimes, the risk pays off; other times, it doesn't."

In "Bangkok Dangerous," the 44-year-old actor's character admits in three-like narration: "Work is steady, money's good—but, it's not for everybody." Unfortunately, so is his latest movie.

In the Pang brothers' Hollywood adaptation of their acclaimed Asian actioner, the dead-mute Thai protagonist of the 1999 original is turned into a hearing-and-speech-impaired American hit man (Cage), who flies to Bangkok for his last hit. As grudgingly takes in an eager young acolyte (our passenger, Shahkrit Yamnarm), and falls in love with a beautiful deaf-mute pharmacist (Jo/Charlie Young).

Jo soon realizes that breaking the killing world's nine sacred rules (don't fall in love, don't make friends, don't trust anybody, etc.) is like a time bomb waiting to explode...and a death wish waiting to be fulfilled!

Where he starts entertaining the possibility of romance and enjoying the company of his trusted word, his executioner begins to hesitate—especially after he learns that his final assignment requires him to knock off a respected social reformer!

Viewers who are primed for chases will derive more pleasure from the movie than those who expect noisy Hollywood blockbuster-style action. Cage, in a shaggy coiffure reminiscent of Javier Bardem's (in as "Incountry for Old Men," isn't bad, but he looks lost in his Southeast Asian surroundings. But, the production gets a much-welcome boost from the refreshingly charming forearm as Cage's loyal sidekick.

The Hong twins' remake of their hit film cleverly utilizes the grit and grime of its exotic locale as a metaphorical backdrop to Jay's moral dismemberment. But, on its way to the Hollywood Dream Machine, the production's flashy visual appeal and in-your-face exposition get lost in murky translation. The hyperkinetic energy and narrative urgency that complemented the previous two entries are likewise compromised.

Debate

Moreover, "Bangkok Dangerous" doesn't offer new insights into the immigrant's debate on loyalty versus moral obligation. With scant moral severity and clockwork precision, action-sequences are staged in swift succession—but, without genuine emotional provocation, they don't pack as much wallop as they should, and only serve as adrenaline-pumped quick fixes that don't deliver lingering or satisfying results.

'My Best Friend's Girl' topbills . . .

From page 6A

ian Cory Aquino, Nadia Fuentes, Angeli Pelayo and Gloria Sevilla.

'The Amazing Race Asia'

Cignal is sponsoring "The Eighties Race...The Amazing Race Asia Season 2?" The sportsreality is a nostalgic fit, because the series stresses teamwork, patience, determination, resilience and irregular—others that are shared by Cabin and Chronosynapsis.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 7 a.m., "Music and Lyrics." Encores at 9 a.m., "Just Married." Sept. 21 at 7 a.m., "Music and Lyrics." Encores at 9 a.m., "Just Married." Sept. 22 at 7 a.m., "Music and Lyrics." Encores at 9 a.m., "Just Married." Sept. 23 at 9 p.m., "Mr. & Mrs. Smith." Encores at 11 a.m., "Mr. & Mrs. Smith." Sept. 24 at 4:30 p.m., "The Deep End of the Ocean."

On Cinemax today at 1 p.m., "Hot Rod, Hong Kong." Tomorrow at 3 p.m., "The Unexpected Mrs. Pollard." Sept. 22 at 7 a.m., "Mirage." Sept. 23 at 5 p.m., "Prime." Sept. 24 at 7 a.m., "Liberator of Jordan." Sept. 25 at 3 p.m., "A Night Case of Murder." Sept. 26 at 7 a.m., "50 Million Man Standoff."

Dance tilt

Czech Mastroser Grammy IV (The Dance Instructor) Dance Showdown on Sept. 27, 7 p.m. at the Crossroad Conversation, Mother Ignacia st., Quezon City. Schools vying for the top prize in...cludo UE Motors, DLSU, UST and nine other universities. Call Jean Barrera at 0917 837 3228.

Pinoy actress lands important role in Michelle Williams-Gael Garcia Bernal *starrer*

NECESITO. A shot at international stardom.

LOS ANGELES—A VIRTUALLY unknown Filipino actress, Mardie Necesito, has just pulled a starring coup. Without much fanfare, Mardi landed an important role in a film that stars Academy and Golden Globe Award nominee, Michelle Williams and acclaimed actor Gael Garcia Bernal, by Swedish writer-director Lukas Moodysson.

At an exported earlier, our interview with Gael for "Babel-ness" in Toronto led to his mention of "Mammoth," in which he told us that one of his costars is Mardie. Here's a feature on Mardie, whom we interviewed via e-mail. We hope we'll come surprised and thrilled she was to bag the role over other Filipino actresses or other Lukas auditions.

She claimed that, at first, she didn't even know that she was trying out for a role that would give her an unprecedented chance to act opposite Gael, with whose credits include Amy Lee's "Borderlock Mountain," and Iñárritu's "Babel" and, the Mexican director who's enjoying a swelling international career with such films as "Frida," "The Motorcycle Diaries" and "Amores Perros."

"Unlike many actors" who have met Mardie described her excitement when she Googled her director, Lukas, and found out he's the highly praised filmmaker of films like "Lilja 4-ever," "Show Me Love" and "Together." Lukas, who made the final decision to pick Mardie for the part, was hailed by his renowned compatriot, the late Ingmar Bergman, as a "young master."

Credits

Lukas' cinematographer is his first English language film's Mexican Prahlad, whose credits include Angelina Jolie's "A Mighty Heart." Lukas' as one of the movie's producers is Lars von Trier, the director-writer behind "Dogville," "Dancing in the Dark" and "Breaking the Waves."

In "Mammoth," Mardie plays Gloria, a mother of two sons who leaves the Philippines to work as the nanny of the daughter (Sophie Nyweider) of a successful New York couple, played by Gael and Michelle. When Gael's businessman character goes to Thailand, he realizes that he wants to change his life. That development sets off a dramatic chain of events that impact the characters of Michelle, Michelle and Sophie.

Mardie informed us that she filmed her scenes in New York, Sweden and the Philippines, specifically in Subic and Bataan. The Manila-born actress also said that she, Lukas and the main cast participated in a press conference about the movie in Sweden. Among her cherished memories of the film in Sweden, she shared sharing breakfast with Michelle and Matilda, the American actress' daughter with the late Heath Ledger. Playing members of her character's family are Perry Dizon, Martin delos Santos, Maria Esmeralda del Carmen and Jun Urbano, Mardie.

The film actress, who lives in Novaliches, Quezon City, grew up in Valenzuela, Bulacan, after finishing high school at St. Jude Academy, Mardie wrote stories for Tagalog comic magazines and product books. There, she clubbed to acting in plays, and that led to appearances on TV soaps, commercials and indie films.

Mardie's credits include Lav Diaz's "Batang West Side" and "Heremias, Book Two"; Dennis Evangelista's "Pandanggo"; "Larawang," a series for cable channel Sinagtala; "Bituing Ikaw," a Guardian movie; "Black Mother Love," an Amazon indie production by Ben Ballinger; the short, "Patay," and "Pabo," a local indie. She is scheduled to dub her lines in "Mammoth," whose line producer in the Philippines is Oli Legaspi Jr., in a Makati studio. "Mammoth for us 'Mammoth' any biggest break so, so far," declared Mardi. And what a break it is!

Excerpts of our interview with Mardie, who wrote: "Pasensya na po dahil hindi ako magsalita Ingles sa English; sa Tagalog ang mga sagot ko".

How did you land the other Filipino actors land the parts in "Mammoth"?

Ang audition lahat ng Pinoy na lumabas sa movie.

What was your reaction when you landed the part opposite Bernal and Williams, two good actors, under an acclaimed director in a film produced by Von Trier' production company?

Parang sira, wala po akong idea kung sino ang hinirgo actors na lumabas. Ang lagal din nilang nag-audition para sa character ni Gloria. Sabay-sabay pong allong pa-audition para sa character ni Gloria. Sabay-sabay pong allong pa-build-build dito sa Pilipinas. Sa lamig dinong mag-audition. Pati kaming nasa—dito nasa stream actresses at dalawa kami ang finalist actresses. Mangpong magpag dalawa-tatlong kami nung isang theater actress na pinagpilian. Three months lago ito nalaman na ako ang napiliin. Hindi ako makapaniwala. Grabe lang yung audition. Draining emotionally kasi two and a half hours ang audition kala ayaw. Because ang ang pagkapanood nila sa akin.

Mang Ai-research ko si Lukas Moodysson sa Google at napanood ko ang award-winning film niyang "Lilja 4-ever-ever," kaka-nosebleed ako dahil ayos ang personal na pamili sa akin. Mendon *yung subtong issue at kaka dahil ang habang ng mga karanta ko si Michelle ako si Matilda, ako si Bibi ay naman every morning.*

How was Lukas as a director?

Napakagaling niyang mag-direct ng mga characters na kaka-kaibigan niyang maliwat ang character ko. Ito ako yung personality, emotionally. Mgaaki-emotion niya sa a direction. At siya din ang nagsulat ng movie. Homongga ako kung paano siya in-execute ang mga drama, kito na ang sarap sa Pilipinas—kuwag dito ang kuwento ng iyak.

Was your lines been clarified to know that "Mammoth" is likely to be an official selection in next year's Berlin Film Festival.

Parated ako na malamang napili na ito sa Berlin Film Festival at kay mahangga ako sila about joining other film festivals, pero wala pang final ang

Tell us more about to unveil. How did you get into acting?

Hindin ilang gustong umarte at magsulat ng kwento. Just along Tagalog komiks and pocket stories na ang hanting ang komiks at pocket books sa Pilipinas. Nag-resis ako ng theater noong sa Tanhuisance," under Gerlie Galdon-Alvarez at Dulaang Sandatan, under Angie Reyes Hindin-Aden ito ako sa TV commercials, indepen-dent films at mga soloyse.

E-mail comments, MMM@yahoo.com, and read his blog, "The Inquirer Report," on or "Mga Inquirer-ang Buhay."

Effortless

Gael told me that he has on-to-one scene with you.

Opo, I have only one scene with Gael. Sa Sweden ito kinunan. Before the scene, may rare-day rounders ang acters. Sa character kasi ang father. Friendly and down-to-earth si Gael. Effortless siya as an actor.

How many scenes do you have with Michelle Williams?

Almost-kasing scenes together si Michelle. Masasabi ko pong magkaibigan ng talaga siyang mgaaki-ang mga kinunan ko kasi ang ng dalawang ito. Dahilang ang daily kinunan ko kasi ang ng dalawang ito. Dahilang ang mga kinunan ko kasi ang ng dalawang ito. Mahirap ang magpagsulong mirror ang sakuwan nila. Very powerful. Para Pinoy ang actors sa mga abroad sa Philippine locations. Mga one month ang stay ang Swedish staff and crew.

How did Lukas and his team adapt to filming in the Philippines?

Mangal din silang pabalik-balik dito para ang mga location hunting, kasama ang sound-training. DP (director of photography) ng "O Amigo" na si Shawn Cpbiral. Walang naging problema, madali silang nako-adapt. Nakasanay din ang weather. Mangan ang dami dito sa mga kano, hehe.

Is there any single scene or preference you enjoy delivering over an intim? Anong pagkaiba-iba sa New York para makipgtrabaho sa Amerikanong ang ating mga aktor. Nagtrabaho ako/Hilang yaya ng anak/Anak nina Michelle at Gael.

The film was shot in the US, Thailand and the Philippines. Did you film in all three locations?

Actually, apat sa location—kasama ang Sweden, sa Trollhatan studios. Sa studio ng Film Svar-kung saan ginawa ang "Lingville" at Mimbr Kidman at "Dancer in the Dark" at Lars von Trier. Sa New York, Sweden at Philippines ako nag-shoot. Yung sa Thailand, di Gael lang.

How long did Lukas and his crew stay here?

Dun-day shoot lang ako dito sa Pinas. Ang climate ng isang eksena in shots. Sa Subic or Bataan nag-shoot. Iba-iba ang mga family ko. Maraming magagandang eksena ang nakasama nila. Very powerful. Para Pinoy ang actors sa mga abroad sa Philippine locations. Mga one month ang stay ang Swedish staff and crew.

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